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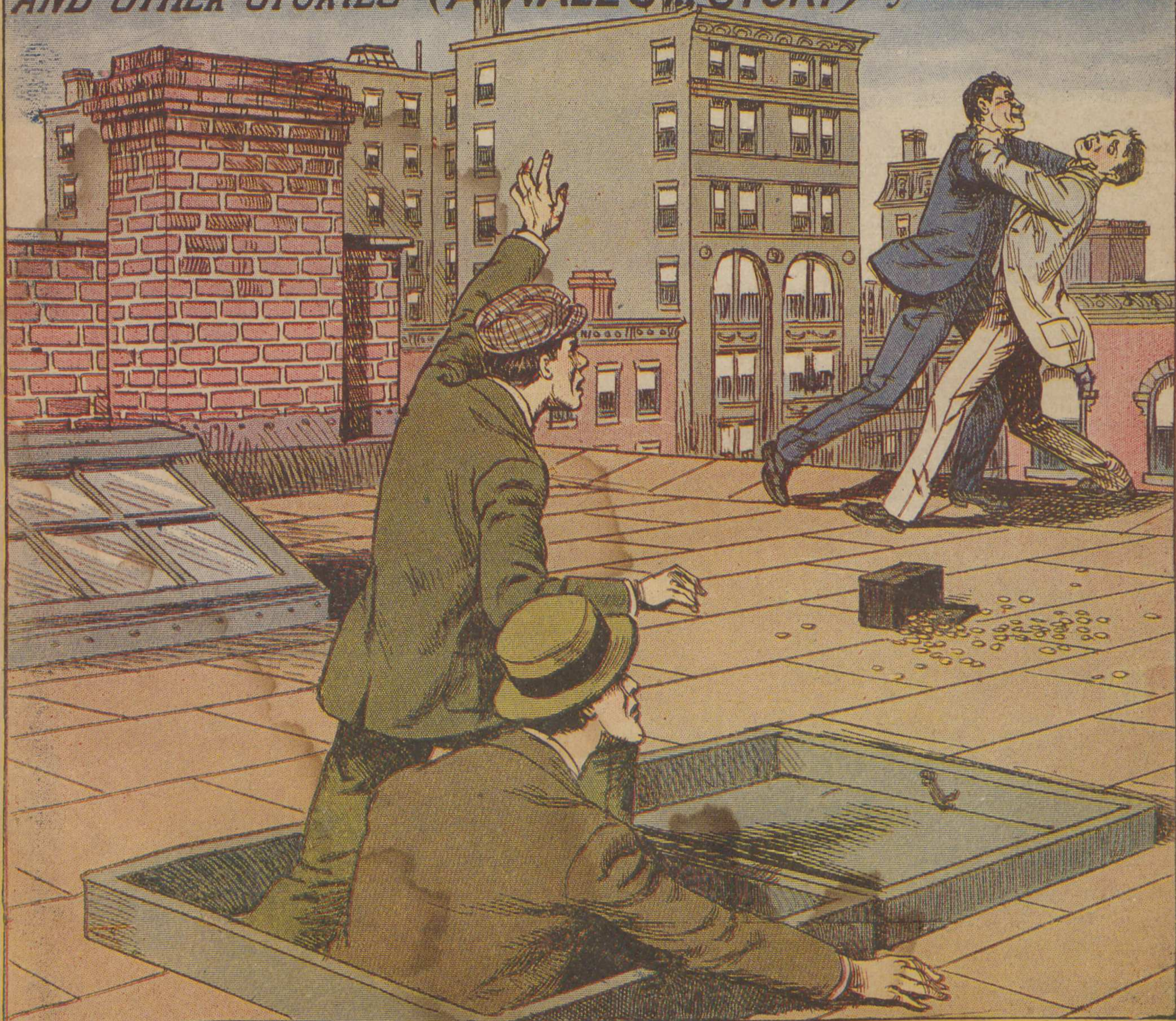
FORTUNE WEEKLY.

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY.

ED, THE OFFICE BOY

OR THE LAD BEHIND THE DEALS

AND OTHER STORIES (A WALL ST. STORY) By A Self-Made Man



When Jimmy and Will came up through the scuttle they were staggered by the sight that met their eyes. Ed and the young crook were struggling on the very edge of the roof in imminent peril of their lives.

Fame and Fortune Weekly

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY

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No. 416.

NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 19, 1913.

Price 5 Cents.

ED, THE OFFICE BOY

—OR—

THE LAD BEHIND THE DEALS

By A SELF-MADE MAN

(A WALL STREET STORY)

CHAPTER I.

ED SHOWS A BOLD FRONT.

"Ed, Mr. Conway wants you," said Cashier Brown to the office boy when he reported his return from the bank and handed in the book in which the day's deposit had been entered.

Ed Ashton walked into the private room and presented himself at the boss' desk.

The broker looked up.

"Yes," he said. "Take this note to Mr. Cumberland, in the Johnstone Building, and get an answer."

"Yes, sir," replied Ed, taking the envelope and leaving the office in his customary brisk way.

Near the corner of Nassau street, close to the wide steps of the Sub-treasury, a lame newsboy named Jimmy Bates was having an altercation with a tough-looking A. D. T. messenger, a head taller than himself.

As Ed approached, the messenger, whose name was Mike Finn, gave Jimmy Bates a shove and then a kick that stretched him on the sidewalk and sent his papers flying about.

Ed bristled up at once, for Jimmy was a particular friend of his; even if he had not been the office boy would have interfered at the sight of a big fellow striking a lad who was physically incapable of holding his own against him.

Mike Finn was known as the bully of Wall Street, and his present actions were in line with his general conduct.

"Here, hold on, Mike Finn; what did you do that for?" demanded Ed, seizing Finn as he made a motion to repeat the kick.

"What's that to you?" scowled Mike, who resented any interference, and particularly from Ed Ashton, whom he didn't like even a little bit.

"It's a whole lot to me, if you want to know," returned Ed, resolutely. "Nobody but a big coward would strike a lame boy smaller than himself."

"Who are you callin' a big coward?"

"You, for you have just proved yourself one."

"Are you lookin' for trouble?" asked Mike, aggressively.

"No, but I won't run away from it if it comes my way in such a case as this. I want you to understand that Jimmy is a friend of mine. Anybody who hits him hits me, and when anybody hits me I resent it."

"Oh, you do?" sneered Finn.

"Yes, I do."

"Do you know who I am?"

"Yes, you're a big slob, and if we weren't on Wall Street I'd smash you in the jaw for knocking Jimmy down."

With a snarl of anger Mike suddenly shot out his first at Ed's face.

But the office boy was on his guard.

He had taken a course of boxing lessons from an ex-puglist, and knew how to duck to avoid a blow of the kind.

Mike's fist shot over his shoulder and the bully was unprepared to ward off the jab that Ed handed him back.

It reached his jaw with such force that his head went back with a jerk, and for a moment dazed him.

Jimmy had in the meanwhile picked himself up and his papers, too, and was watching the outcome of the wordy duel between Ed and Finn.

When he saw it had come to blows he was not afraid but the office boy could hold his own against his strapping opponent, for he knew Ed was strong and active, and skilled in the art of self-defence.

What he was afraid of was that a regular fight would result, and scrapping wasn't tolerated in Wall Street.

If the officer on the beat was not in sight there were private detectives around, Secret Service men they were called, who would soon interfere and march the belligerents off to the station-house in short order.

It wouldn't have greatly worried Jimmy to see Finn in the toils, but when it came to Ed Ashton, that was quite another thing.

He cast a swift look around, as several bootblacks ran up to see what was going to happen, and though he saw nobody that looked like an officer, he shouted:

"Cheese it; here comes a cop."

Mike Finn, for particular reasons, had a strong distaste for the police, and when he heard the word "cop" his fancy pictured the officer on the beat swooping down on the scene, and instead of striking out at Ed again, he cut across the street and ran down Broad street, leaving the office boy master of the field.

Ed looked around and, seeing nothing that looked like a policeman, he turned to Jimmy and asked him what the trouble was between him and Finn.

"He pushed me cap over me eyes as he was passin', and when I asked him wot he did dat for, he came back, grabbed me and said he didn't allow nobody to give him any back talk. Den when I told him wot I t'ought of him, he gave me de push and de kick wot yer seen. I wish dere had been a brick around, I'd have trown it at his bean," said Jimmy.

"Look at me papers. Half of dem is mussed up, and I hate to offer dem to me customers. I'm glad dat yer let him have one on de jaw. Maybe he'll let me alone after dis."

"If he doesn't he'll have me to reckon with," said Ed, who then went on his way.

Reaching the Johnstone Building, he took an elevator up to the third floor, and walked to the brokerage office of Cyrus Cumberland.

"Is Mr. Cumberland in?" he asked a clerk.

"Yes, but he's engaged."

"I'll wait," said Ed, taking a seat.

It was nearly half-past three and the Exchange was closed. Several persons were standing around the ticker looking at the last quotations.

There had been considerable excitement at the Exchange that day.

The morning had opened with the continuation of the D. & G. boom, and everybody buying on a rising market, except, of course, those who were conservative in their estimation of booms, and never held on for the last dollar.

These people were either holding off entirely, or selling their holdings and taking the profit that was in sight for them.

Their wisdom was apparent when a strong bear movement developed about noon, and by sheer force upset the market, broke the boom and brought on a slump that caused a small panic among those long on certain stocks, particularly D. & G., which was the object of the attack.

A number of brokers who had been buying heavily on their individual accounts, some of them using their customers' funds to make a winning, were caught in the shuffle and squeezed badly.

Among these was Cyrus Cumberland.

He was a man who had done some squeezing himself when luck ran his way, and the taste of his own medicine was not pleasant to his palate.

He had bought a block of D. & G. the day before from Broker Conway, and the note Ed had in his hand had reference to it.

In a few minutes a well-dressed man, whom Ed took for a broker, came out of the private room, and that was the signal for him to enter.

He knocked first, and heard a gruff "Come in."

He knew Mr. Cumberland by sight, and stepped up to his desk.

"I've brought a note from Mr. Conway," said the office boy.

The broker did not need to be told who his visitor came from, for he knew Ed ran Mr. Conway's errands.

"Leave. I'm busy now," said Cumberland.

"I was directed to bring back an answer," said Ed.

The broker tore the note open, glanced it over, scowled and said there wasn't any answer.

So Ed returned to his office and reported to his employer.

"Go back and tell him I expect an answer," said Conway.

Ed returned to the Johnstone Building, entered Cumberland's room and gave his message.

"Get out of here!" roared Cumberland.

"I'll get out as soon as you give me the answer," said Ed.

The broker pushed a button in his desk and a clerk responded.

"Show this boy into the corridor," said the broker.

"Come, young man, get a move on."

"I'm waiting for a reply to a note I brought."

The clerk looked at his employer.

"Put him out!" roared the broker.

"You hear," said the clerk. "Walk out, please."

"All right," said Ed, "I'll have to tell Mr. Conway that you refuse to give me an answer, and ordered your clerk to throw me out."

"Get out of this room!" cried Cumberland, wrathfully.

Ed walked out and, returning to his boss, told that gentleman how Cumberland had treated him.

"Take this note to Haskins, in the Mills Building," said Conway, calmly.

Ed started for the Mills Building.

He got a brief reply from Haskins to fetch back, and started for the elevator.

Out of one of the offices on the corridor popped an A. D. T. messenger boy, and Ed recognized him as Mike Finn.

"What did you run away for when I gave you that clip on the jaw?" said Ed. "Had enough?"

"I'll show you, you galoot!" cried Finn, making a rush at him.

In another moment there was a mix-up.

CHAPTER II.

CONCERNING THE DEAL ED WAS BEHIND.

When the smoke cleared away, so to speak, Finn was sitting on the floor holding the same jaw in his hand, and looking as if he thought a mule had kicked him.

"Want any more?" asked Ed. "If you do I'll wait till you get up."

"I'd like to kill yer!" replied Finn, in a hissing tone.

"I don't doubt it, but I'm not afraid of you trying to do such a thing. You haven't got the spunk to risk a trip to the electric chair. Besides, I wouldn't give you half a chance. You're nothing but a big bully. You're large and strong enough to handle me if you knew how to do it; but you haven't got sand enough to put up a decent fight with anybody your size who shows he isn't afraid of you. That's all I've got to say to you except this—leave Jimmy Bates alone after this, or I'll thrash the life out of you if I go to jail for it."

With this stiff reminder Ed walked to the elevator, caught a car and went down.

"I'll get even with that guy if I die for it," muttered Finn, as he picked himself up and followed.

When Ed got back he knocked at the door, for he knew by the sounds of voices inside that the boss was engaged, but he had his reply to hand in.

"Sit down," he heard a voice cry, and he recognized it as Cumberland's. "Sit down, or I'll——"

As Ed knew that was no way for anybody to talk to his employer, he made no bones about opening the door and walking in, though he had not received permission to do so.

The scene that met his view showed him he had done the right thing.

Cumberland was holding Mr. Conway back in his chair, and held a revolver half pointed at him.

The entrance of the boy attracted the visitor's attention, and he glared around at Ed.

"What do you want?" he demanded. "Come over here. If you try to leave the room I'll shoot you full of holes. Keep your hand away from the desk!" he roared at Conway, as that gentleman made a move to reach the electric button to press it.

Quick as lightning Ed took advantage of the chance.

He stepped forward as he had been told to do, then seized a business directory off the top of the desk and flung it into Cumberland's face.

He followed that up by throwing himself on the visitor and grabbing the hand that held the revolver.

The revolver went off in the tussle, alarming the whole office, and startling those in the adjacent ones.

Ed seized the broker around the waist and, giving him a shove, succeeded in tripping him up.

They fell backward together and Cumberland's head hit the corner of the private safe.

That dazed him so badly that Ed had no difficulty in wresting the revolver from his grasp, just as Cashier Brown and two clerks rushed into the room, their movements accelerated by the continuous sounding of the boss' electric buzzer.

Before Cumberland got his wits in working order again he was in the hands of the three men, Ed standing near with the weapon in his hand.

"Shall I send for the police?" asked the office boy.

"Not yet. Go outside and keep the corridor door shut," said Mr. Conway.

Ed rushed out just in time to meet two people coming in—brokers from neighboring offices.

He let them pass and then slammed the door shut and locked it.

That barred any one else from getting in.

"What's the trouble?" asked one of the brokers.

"Oh, a little scrap in the private office."

"But there was a pistol shot."

"That wasn't fired at anybody. The party who made the trouble had his gun out, as a bluff, I guess, and when I grabbed his arm the weapon went off."

"Who was the party—one of your customers?"

"No. He's a broker who lost his head over some business with the boss."

"What broker?"

Ed, however, became suddenly deaf.

He stopped the visitors from entering the private room, the door of which he had closed when he came out.

In the meantime, Cumberland came to his senses and realized he had put himself in a bad hole.

He begged Conway to let him down easy.

That broker consented on condition that Cumberland make the settlement that was the bone of contention.

There being no other way out of his predicament, Cumberland agreed and signed a paper to that effect.

While he was doing this the crowd outside was told by the cashier that there was nothing wrong.

The revolver had exploded by accident, and no one had been hurt.

This assurance sent the crowd away, and when the coast was clear Cumberland took his departure, feeling decidedly down in the mouth.

He had been badly crippled by the slump in D. & G., and was forced to borrow money wherever he could get it.

In order to settle with Conway, according to the terms of the paper, he was obliged to get his wife to mortgage her house for a round sum.

Conway could have driven him to the wall had he forced an immediate cash settlement, as was within his rights, but he let him off with part cash and agreed to take the balance on time notes.

Ed got home late that afternoon on account of the excitement at the office.

It was half-past four before he got away, and he usually left at half-past three, or not later than four.

Ed lived on the lower East Side, in one of the tenements of the district.

His mother took in dressmaking to help out the family resources, and his sister was a salesgirl in a Grand street store.

He had a younger brother who went to school, but was expected to graduate the coming June, when he would be put to work to do his part of supporting the house.

Mrs. Ashton was refined in her manners, having come of a good family, and her daughter Emily was like her.

She had been unfortunate in her marriage, and her family, having a considerable amount of pride, had never recognized her since she ran away with a newspaper reporter without resources or a paying position.

After ten years of a hand-to-mouth existence, with three children to bring up, Mr. Ashton, who had become sub-editor on a trade paper, at small wages, secured a job in Chicago.

Six months later his letters and remittances ceased, and for nine years he had not been heard from, and all efforts to trace his whereabouts had failed.

All that his wife ever learned was that he had suddenly severed his connection with the newspaper he was on and gone West; but what part of the West no one was able to say, so Mrs. Ashton had no idea whether she was a widow or not.

Whether her husband was alive or dead, he failed to send her any money, and so for six years the little woman had a hard struggle to get along and raise her three children.

Then Ed went to work in Wall Street, and the following year Emily went into a store, and as the dressmaking business continued steady, things went easier with the Ashtons.

It was some walk from the office home, but Ed rarely took a car when the weather was not too bad for hiking.

Every nickel counted with him, and for a long time he had been saving up money to try his luck in the market.

He got \$50 together at last and put it up on D. & G.

A messenger friend tipped him off to the fact that it was going up 15 or 20 points, and he got in on it at 90, buying five shares on margin at the little bank on Nassau street.

It had reached 102 that morning, an advance of 12 points from the price Ed gave for it.

Ed intended to hold it till it reached 105 or 106.

But during the morning he heard two brokers talking about the anticipated bear raid, to which they had been tipped off by some friend on the inside, and that induced the boy to sell out at the first chance that came his way.

This happened at eleven o'clock, and his shares went at 103 3-8.

As events turned out, it was lucky he sold, for otherwise he would have lost not only all the profit in sight, but the bulk of his \$50.

When he went home it was with the knowledge that he had made \$65, and was worth \$115, which looked like a small fortune to him.

Naturally, he felt good.

He stopped in at the store where his sister was employed at the notion counter.

It was then nearly half-past five.

The store closed at six and opened at eight, long hours for the girls.

"Hello, sis," he said, stopping at the counter.

"Why, Ed, is that you?" cried his sister.

"Looks like me, doesn't it."

"Miss Eagan, this is my brother," said Emily, introducing Ed to her side partner.

"Glad to know you, Miss Eagan," bowed the boy.

Miss Eagan smiled sweetly.

"Emily has spoken to me about you," she said. "She said you worked in a Wall Street broker's office."

"That's right, to a certain extent."

"To a certain extent!" exclaimed his sister. "Why, you know you do work in Mr. Conway's office."

"No, I do most of my work outside. I'm on the run all day. I'm not in the office a quarter of my time."

"Well, you're in the office just the same."

Ed remained talking with the girls till some customers came up to the counter, when he took his leave and reached home at a quarter of six.

As his mother was busy putting the finishing touches on a dress that had been promised that evening, and had to be delivered, for it was to be worn to a reception, the only signs of supper was the teakettle boiling on the gas range.

Sometimes his mother's assistant helped get supper, but on this occasion she was helping on the dress.

"Supper will be late to-night," said his mother. "I shall want you to take this dress to Mrs. Simpson as soon as we have finished it."

"Very well, mother. How long before you will have it done?" said Ed.

"At least half an hour."

"Then I'll get supper ready myself. I might as well put in my time that way as to hang around doing nothing."

Ed was not such a bad cook.

He had learned by watching his mother, practicing on his own hook, and taking points from his sister.

He had supper nearly ready by the time his sister got home, and as the dress wasn't done yet, he sat down in advance and ate his share of the meal.

By the time he had finished the dress was carefully wrapped up and ready for him to carry to the Simpson house, four blocks away.

It was twenty minutes of seven when he started out, and ten minutes later he was making his way upstairs to the Simpson apartments.

CHAPTER III.

IN THE HANDS OF HIS ENEMY.

Mrs. Simpson's husband not having got home yet, the lady could not pay the bill.

They were good for it, so Ed said he would come back in an hour for the money.

A moving picture show had just been opened in the next street, and Ed felt that, after winning \$115 that way, he could afford to blow himself to the show.

He put in an hour there, though the pictures were nothing to brag about, and then started back for the Simpson place.

He didn't get far when he was suddenly set upon by a bunch of young toughs and knocked senseless by a stone.

The young ruffians were known as the stable gang, and Mike Finn was a distinguished member of it.

Without knowing it Ed had invaded their stamping grounds, had been seen by Finn going into the movie, and in obedience to Mike's request the bunch lay in wait for the Wall Street office boy to come out, and when he did they followed him until the moment favored his doing up.

He was then dragged into a dark alley to the stable frequented by the gang, and there one of the number went through his clothes and found twenty cents in change, all the money Ed had about him at the time.

Although that was meager plunder, it was enough for them to rush the growler on, and one of the youths, securing the tin kittle, started for the corner saloon to get it filled with lager.

Mike looked down on the insensible Ed with a feeling of hate.

The lantern light which meagerly lit up the stable shone on the cut made by the stone.

"If I thought he'd feel it I'd kick the stuffin' out of him," he said.

"What yer got agin him, Mike?" asked one of his friends.

"Never mind what I've got against him. I'm down on him like a load of iron."

"Wait till he comes to his senses and den yer kin make him stand up and take a lickin'. We'll stop him from gettin' away, so he'll have to fight, and you kin put it all over him."

Mike had no desire to engage in a scrap with Ed.

The experience he had had that day told him that the office boy could make matters exceedingly interesting for him, and

he was not in favor of fighting any one he didn't feel reasonably sure of whipping.

The gang, judging from Mike's size and general aggressiveness, believed he was able to whip most any lad of his size.

His bluff had thus far gone with them, and none of them cared to pick a quarrel with him.

"Naw," said Mike, "he'd put up too big a squeal when I got to slammin' him around, and the cop might happen to be around this way and hear him. We'll lock him in that van, and he'll have to stay there till mornin'."

The van in question was a crazy-looking vehicle, the sides, back and front of which were wood, while the roof consisted of canvas, stretched on curved pieces of wood two inches thick.

It was used to move the furniture and effects of the residents of the district from one tenement to another.

The proprietor of the van did a good business, for somebody was moving all the time, for one reason or another.

The toughs were glad to get Ed out of the way, so they fell in with Mike's suggestion, and the office boy was loaded into the vehicle and the doors secured on him from the outside, so he couldn't open them when he came to his senses and tried to get out.

The lager was brought and the bunch had a couple of good drinks all around.

Then they left the stable and shut the door after them.

In the course of half an hour Ed recovered consciousness and found himself in the dark.

He got up and began to feel around to see where he was.

His touch encountering wood on all sides, he concluded he was in some vacant room of limited proportions, and he wondered how he came to be there.

He could not find a window on any of the four sides, nor could he distinguish the door, for the double one, which formed the entire back of the van, joined in the center, and had neither handle nor keyhole, presenting a surface as smooth as any other part of the inside of the vehicle.

"This is mighty funny," thought Ed. "I appear to be in a room without a door or a window. It must be in a cellar, and the entrance is through a trap in the ceiling. Why have I been imprisoned in such a place?"

Then he remembered his German silver match-safe, and he felt in his pocket for the article.

It was not there.

Neither was his knife, nor his twenty cents change which the girl at the window of the moving picture show had handed him with his ticket in exchange for the quarter he gave her.

He realized that he had been cleaned out by the bunch which had attacked him.

That fact did not surprise him, but he could not understand why he had been put into that place.

As he stumbled up against the end of the wagon he was surprised to notice that the room shook.

That was singular, and his first impression was that it must be that the boards were loose.

Flinging his weight against the wall to test the matter, he found that it was the whole place which shook, not the boards themselves.

"This can't be a room after all; that is, not an ordinary one," he thought. "It moves under a slight shock."

Experimenting with the floor by jumping up and down, he found it springy.

Then the truth struck him—that he was in a covered wagon, and the boarded sides showed it to be a van.

As most vans have straight sides and a wooded roof, Ed supposed this one to be built on similar lines.

The sides of the best vans are covered on the inside with a kind of padding, designed to protect the furniture put into them from being scratched.

This van was not so provided, as the household goods moved in it were usually of the most ordinary kind, and could stand rough handling and friction.

The interior, however, was as air-tight as a canvas roof and a few crevices in the bottom could make it.

Ed, knowing that vans possessed little if any ventilation, began to fear that he would suffer for want of air before he was released.

He missed his knife more than anything else, for with that he could have cut out a good-sized breathing hole.

As time passed he felt no great inconvenience in the van.

Back of the driver's seat was a small, oblong pane of glass. It was divided in two sections, one of which was gone entirely, and in connection with the crevices in the bottom, afforded all the ventilation the boy needed.

Ed sat on a bundle of old blankets and gunny sacks used in packing a load.

At the end of an hour he heard voices in the barn.

He was about to pound on the wall of the van and shout to be let out when it occurred to him that he had better wait and find out the character of the persons first.

They came over to the van and mounted the seat.

Ed heard their voices so plain now that he felt there must be an opening up there somewhere.

"It's a dead cinch, Jim," said one of the men. "We can easily get around the back way and force the rear door with a jimmy."

"That's all right, but he's got a safe, and he'll stow all his money away in that after he closes up," said the other.

"That doesn't make any difference. It's only an old-fashioned safe, and it won't be hard to open on the combination."

"But we haven't got the combination."

"Give me half an hour and I'll get it open," said the first speaker, confidently. "I've had a good deal of experience with safes, and know how to find the combination."

"If you think you can open it, I'm with you."

"I'll guarantee it."

"How about the cop on the beat?"

"I want you to stand at the front window, and when you hear any one coming I look to you to give me the signal. That's why I'm taking you into this thing."

"I'm to watch while you work?"

"That's the idea."

"I wonder how much we are likely to get?"

"Several hundred dollars. He does a good business at that joint."

"It's ten now. I suppose we'll go there about one?"

"Yes. And when we've made the raffle we'll come back here and divide."

"Let's go up into the hayloft and take a snooze."

"It won't do. We might oversleep ourselves."

"No use of staying here, then. We might as well put in the time at the Gridiron. The place keeps open till one."

"Come on. We'll go there."

"Where's your jimmy?"

"It's in my carpet bag with other tools. I keep it in the van here. We'll come back for it when we're ready to start."

The men got down and left the stable, which the leader of the night's enterprise locked after them.

He was employed as a helper by the boss of the van, but he was a professional crook, and worked for the van man solely because it often afforded him an opportunity to spot places worth robbing which he afterwards revisited and cleaned out when circumstances favored him.

Mike Finn and his stable gang did not come back.

They ran across a drunk with three dollars in his pocket and took the money.

That put them in possession of funds enough to visit a pool cellar, where they stayed until the place closed up, then they went to their several homes.

During the next three hours no one came to the stable, and the silence and lonesomeness of the place put Ed to sleep.

He was aroused by voices at the rear of the van.

The two men had come back, the leader of the contemplated robbery to get his jimmy and some other tools out of his carpet bag.

They found the van doors closed, with the padlock not locked holding the iron hasp in place.

This was the way the boys had found it, and they left it the same way after shoving Ed inside.

The crook opened the doors and hopped in, and the noise he made awakened Ed.

"Got a match?" asked the crook of Jim.

His companion fumbled in his clothes, and then said he didn't have one.

"Never mind. I know where the bag is, and I guess I can find the tools I want by the feel."

The speaker did not notice the office boy's presence in the darkness, and he did not have to go to the corner, where the boy sat propped up against the blankets and bags, but to the opposite one.

As it was, he crouched down within a couple of feet of Ed, and that lad could have touched him had he reached out his arm.

The crook found what he wanted without much difficulty and left the van.

He did not take the trouble to close the doors of the van, but left the stable at once with his companion.

CHAPTER IV.

ED IS PRESENTED WITH \$100.

Ed listened to their retiring footsteps, heard the stable door closed with a bang, and then silence followed.

The boy knew that the van doors had not been shut, so he took advantage of his chance to leave his prison pen.

Glad enough he was to get out as he sprang down on the stable floor.

The next thing was to escape from the stable.

This was not so easy, for after stumbling around the stable trying to locate the door, he found it locked.

"Now, how am I going to get out?" he asked himself.

It was a poser that he couldn't find an answer to.

There was not a window in the place that he could see.

A couple of stout horses belonging to the van man were in their stalls on one side, and in the third stall was the horse of a huxster who peddled cheap fruit, and sometimes vegetables, around the district.

His rickety wagon stood near the door.

The stable was a tumbledown affair, put together by amateur carpenters originally, and roofed over with boards covered with tarred cloth to keep the rain out.

A ladder communicated with the loft where the hay and oats were kept.

Ed went up there and looked for a window.

He found an opening closed in by a wooden shutter, secured by a hasp and padlock.

The key was in the padlock.

Ed unlocked it and pushed the shutter open.

Above the window was a projecting beam with an iron hook imbedded in it.

This was evidently meant to hold a tackle for hoisting a bale of hay.

The drop to the alley was not far when one lowered oneself by the arms first, and Ed was soon out of the building.

It was then half-past one, and he knew his mother and sister must have wondered over his lengthy absence, if his mother was not still awake worrying about him.

The crook and his companion were off on their nefarious job, but Ed knew from their talk that they were coming back to the stable to divide their plunder in the event of success.

He believed it was his duty to put the police wise to their plans, and as the precinct station was only a few blocks away, he started for it.

Arrived there, he told his story about how he had been treated by the gang of toughs, whom the man at the desk guessed was the stable gang, and then how he had overheard the two men speaking about their contemplated burglary.

"What place were they going to rob?" asked the officer.

"I haven't the least idea. They didn't mention its location, nor the name of the man they proposed to rob," replied Ed.

"Your information is not very explicit, for you didn't see the men, and could not describe their appearance. I guess one or both of them is connected with the stable or they wouldn't have gone in there. When the robbery is reported, your statement will supply us with a clew to the rascals."

"You needn't wait till the robbery is reported. You can catch them to-night. I heard one of them, the leader of the enterprise, say that if they got what they were after, they would return to the stable and divide their plunder."

"Now you're talking."

"If you took a ladder with you you could enter the stable by means of the opening in the loft through which I made my escape. I left it open. It's right above the door, which is locked with a padlock. By lying in wait inside you would catch them with the goods."

After giving his name and address, and stating that he was employed by Broker Conway, in Wall Street, Ed was allowed to go home.

He reached his room without waking either his mother or sister, and turned in.

Next morning, as he was eating his breakfast somewhat later than usual, a policeman called and told him he would be required to appear at the Tombs Police Court about eleven o'clock.

"The men were caught, then?" he asked, after saying he would be on hand.

"Yes, they were nabbed in the stable. They cleaned out the safe of a Grand street hardware store, and would probably have got away with the job but for you. The man who was robbed said that his loss amounted to \$500 in money and tools, all of which has been recovered. I guess he'll hand you something for saving his property."

When Mr. Conway came down about quarter of ten Ed told

him about his night's adventure, and said he had been notified by the police to be at court at eleven o'clock, though he said he did not see what his testimony would amount to.

"Well, you must obey the order of the police," said his employer.

So at eleven Ed reported himself to the clerk of the court.

Shortly afterward two men were brought to the bar.

One was of average size and had a smooth face, while the other was smaller and wore a mustache.

Ed did not recognize either, but they proved to be the two men the office boy had heard talking in the stable.

The complainant, a man named Smith, went on the stand and swore that his store was robbed during the night.

He testified that he lived in apartments on a side street within a block of his store, and knew nothing about the robbery until he was awakened by a policeman at four o'clock that morning, who told him that his store had been entered by two crooks who were now in custody.

He went with the officer to his store and found that the back door had been forced by a jimmy so that the bolts could be got at and worked back.

His safe showed no appearance of having been tampered with, but on opening it he discovered that all the previous day's receipts and some other money, amounting to \$450, had been abstracted.

He also found that tools to the value of \$50 had been carried off.

He accompanied the officer to the precinct station and identified the tools, and learned that the cash taken from the thieves amounted to the sum missing.

Ed was then called on, and his testimony enlightened the two rascals as to why the police were hiding in the stable ready to pounce upon them when they returned there.

Ed explained how he happened to be inside the van when the men got up on the seat and began talking about the contemplated burglary, and told how he had gone to the precinct station as soon as he made his escape from the stable.

The crooks treated him to black looks while he was on the stand, and the chief one muttered that he would get square with him some time.

The result of the examination was the remanding of the prisoners under \$1,000 bail each, and as this was not offered, they were sent back to prison.

Store-keeper Smith shook hands with Ed, told him he was greatly indebted to him for going to the police with his information, and finally presented him with \$100 as evidence of his appreciation.

Ed then returned to Wall Street and his duties.

The story was printed in the afternoon papers in the brief way that unimportant crimes of the kind are dealt with.

Ed read it and it gave him a peculiar sensation to see his name in print.

However, he didn't care.

He had made \$100 out of his troubles of the night, and almost doubled his small private capital.

During the day the police arrested several of the stable gang, and when he got home he found another policeman had called with the request that he go to the Tombs and see if he could identify any of his assailants.

He responded, and the boys were paraded before him in the company of other lads, but he was unable to pick any one out connected with the assault.

So the arrested members of the gang were allowed to go.

Next day he ran across Mike Finn on the street.

That lad favored him with a triumphant scowl and passed on.

Ed intended to take no further notice of him unless he molested Jimmy Bates.

During the following week Ed noticed that A. & F. was going up.

He immediately bought 20 shares of it on margin at 88.

It went up to 90 and a fraction, and as it seemed to be anchored at that price, Ed sold out at the small profit of \$40.

A few days afterward it went up two points more, then in a day or two it dropped back to 89.

If he had held on, Ed figured that he might have made \$40 more, but he also figured that probably he would have come out worse than he did.

It was about this time that Erie began to rise.

It was down to 35, and Ed called that low for the stock.

After thinking the matter over he put all his money into 25 shares, and in three days Erie was up to 42.

He did not want to risk it further, so he sold out and added \$175 to his capital.

His success in his three deals kept him on the lookout for the fourth.

Several chances escaped him because his attention was taken up by his duties, which he never slighted for his own affairs.

One afternoon Conway gave him a note to take to a broker in Jersey City.

He delivered it and was told that there was no answer.

Outside he heard two brokers talking about a mining stock which had recently advanced from 25 cents to 35 cents.

It was the Golden Giant.

Ed remembered reading something about a fresh strike of ore which had turned up in the mine.

On his way back to the ferry he decided to invest in Golden Giant shares, for he guessed the price was likely to go higher.

When he got off work, which he did soon after his return to the office, he went to a Curb broker he knew and bought 1,000 shares of Golden Giant outright at 35 cents, paying \$350.

Next day Ed got his certificates and carried them home with him, but he did not show them to his mother nor his sister.

He was keeping his Wall Street ventures a secret for the present, hoping to surprise his folks later with the results of his private speculative deals.

As a matter of fact, they would have been struck dumb with surprise and wonder had he confessed that he was now worth practically \$425.

Once that sum would have looked like a fortune to him, but the more he had to do with the market the less important his growing capital looked to him.

Nothing short of \$1,000 would now excite his enthusiasm, and he looked forward eagerly to the time when he could handle that amount of cash and say it was all his own.

CHAPTER V.

TROUBLE AT HIS HOME.

Several days after he bought the mining stock he was rushing past the Curb Exchange when he noticed some excitement going on there.

He stopped and asked a broker's assistant what was doing.

"There's been a sudden rise in a mining stock. As it is rather scarce the brokers are trying to bring some of it to the surface."

"What stock is it?" asked Ed.

"Golden Giant."

"Is that so? What is it going for now?"

"Fifty cents, but it will go higher."

"What's the cause of the rise?"

"A fresh discovery of rich ore is reported to have been made in the mine. The stock is the center of attraction at present on the Goldfield and other Western exchanges. Its rise on the Curb is the natural result."

"Do you think it will go to \$1?"

"I wouldn't be surprised if it did."

Ed continued on his way, tickled to death over the advance in his stock.

If the price rose 10 cents more he would be worth \$1,000.

If it went to \$1 he would be worth nearly \$1,500.

Things seemed to be coming his way.

On his return from his errand to the Mills Building he stopped again at the Curb and made inquiries about Golden Giant.

It had risen to 55 cents.

On the corner of Broad street, facing the Morgan Bank, stood a push-cart on which apples were displayed for two, three and five cents each.

Mike Finn was bargaining with the Italian for three two-cent ones for a nickel, but the Dago was only selling them straight.

"Aw, what's the matter with you. Have a heart; I've only got a nickel," said Mike.

"No sell-a t'ree for five. Make-a no mon'. Two cent-a piece."

Mike had three apples in his hand and he hated to put one back or pay the extra cent.

Just then a young lady stopped at the cart and asked for two three-cent apples.

While the Italian was waiting on her, Mike slipped an apple into each of his side pockets and picked up another.

"I'll take two," he said. "Give me a cent out of that nickel."

"All-a right," said the Italian, passing over the cent.

As Mike was beating a triumphant retreat, Jimmy Bates,

who had seen Mike hide the two apples, slipped up to the Italian and told him.

The Dago was mad and, rushing after Mike, grabbed him.

"Pay-a me four cent-a more or I call-a da police," he said.

"What's the matter with you?" snarled Mike. "I gave you four cents."

"I know-a dat. You pay-a for two ap'. You steal-a two more. Got-a in your pock'. Hand-a ov' or I fix-a you."

"Get out, you're dreamin'."

"No-a dream'," said the Italian, seizing one of Mike's pockets and feeling one of the concealed apples. "Four cent-a or make-a you troub'."

"Go to grass!" roared Mike, swinging himself clear of the Italian, and giving him a violent shove he started across the street on the run.

The Dago fell against the end of his cart, knocking away the supporting stick.

Down went the vender as the cart tipped and showered himself with his entire stock in trade.

Three bootblacks and two newspaper lads uttered a shout of glee and scrambled for as many of the apples as they could grab.

Then they scattered with their plunder.

Ed had witnessed the whole scene, and he and Jimmy helped the furious Italian on his feet.

The Dago whisked out a stiletto and glared around after Mike, but that youth had by this time made good his retreat and was not in sight.

A crowd gathered around the luckless apple merchant.

Ed lifted his wagon and Jimmy put the stick under the end of it.

At this juncture a policeman came up and seeing the dagger in the half-crazy Italian's hand, arrested him for carrying a concealed weapon.

Jimmy explained the cause of the trouble, giving Mike's name and saying he was an A. D. T. messenger connected with the Broad street branch office.

The officer ordered the Italian to pick up his scattered fruit.

Jimmy helped him, and then the apple vender was forced to wheel his wagon to the precinct station, where he was locked up and his apples taken charge of.

After hearing the facts of the case from the Dago and the arresting officer, the lieutenant at the desk called a detective and sent him after Mike Finn.

That lad was duly arrested, taken to the station, charged with theft and assault, and locked up.

A policeman was then sent out to find Jimmy Bates.

He was brought in and detained as a witness.

"Aw, I say, dis ain't a fair deal," protested Jimmy. "I ain't done nothin', and I'll lose me paper business. Let me go and I'll show up at de court when yer want me."

But his appeal received no consideration, and like many another Good Samaritan, he came in for the short end.

On one of his errands Ed heard that Jimmy had been taken in by a cop as a witness of the affair.

When he got back to the office he telephoned to Headquarters about it.

During the talk over the wire he admitted that he was as much a witness of the incident as Jimmy.

Half an hour later a policeman called at the office and asked him if he had seen what happened in the case.

Ed said he had.

"Then you'll have to go with me to court."

"I can't go now. I haven't been to the bank yet."

"Some one else will have to go for you, for you've got to come with me."

Ed went into the private room, followed by the policeman, and the matter was submitted to the broker.

"You'll have to go, Ed," said Conway. "Explain the matter to Mr. Brown."

At three o'clock Ed was at the Tombs Court, and there he found Jimmy.

The Italian was brought to the bar first.

The officer told his story.

Jimmy admitted he had seen the Dago pull out his knife.

Ed was called, and said he had seen the stiletto in the man's hand.

The Italian was sentenced to one year in State prison, but as it was his first offence, and he had suffered great provocation and loss, the magistrate suspended sentence and let the man go with a warning.

Mike was then brought up.

The Italian was his accuser, and Jimmy and Ed were witnesses against him.

He got six months on the Island and was led away.

Jimmy returned to his stamping grounds, while Ed went home, as there was no use of him going back to the office at half-past three.

At seven that evening there came a tremendous pounding on the outer door of the Ashton apartments.

Emily answered the knock, and was confronted by a brawny, aggressive-looking Irishman.

"I want to know if this is where Ed Ashton lives?" asked the visitor in menacing tones.

"Yes," replied Emily.

"I want to see him out here in the hall, do ye mind."

"I will tell him. What is your name?"

"Niver mind me name. Sind him out here."

Emily shut the door on the man and went into the kitchen where Ed was talking to his mother.

"There's a man at the door, an Irishman, who wants to see you out in the hall. I don't like his looks or his manner. He appears to be angry about something. Have you had any trouble to-day with such a man?" she asked.

"No, I've had no trouble with any one. Did you ask him his name?"

"I did, but he wouldn't give it."

"I can't imagine who he is, or what he wants with me."

"I'm afraid it has something to do with that court matter."

"Can't be. That concerned an Italian, not an Irishman."

"This man spoke as though he had a grudge against you."

"I'll go and see him."

Ed went to the door, saw the visitor leaning against the banisters outside, and asked him what he wanted.

"Come out here till I wipe the flure wid yez, ye young imp!" roared the visitor, making a reach for the office boy.

"What's the matter with you? Are you crazy? Who are you, anyway? I never saw you before."

"The matter wid me is this, I'm goin' to break ivery bone in your body for gettin' me son Micky sent to the Island. Do yez understand that?"

Ed saw right away that he was up against the father of Mike Finn, who was a longshoreman on South street, and a pretty tough proposition.

"Hold on there, Mr. Finn, I didn't send your son to the Island."

"Who did, thin?"

"The magistrate at the Tombs Police Court."

"He wouldn't have sint him if ye hadn't testified agin him."

"I only stated what I saw your son do on Broad street."

"Ye lied agin him. Ye said he stole two apples from a Dago and thin licked the Macaroni. Me son wouldn't stale nothin'. He's a fine b'y, is Micky, and now he's been sint away in disgrace all on your account, and he'll lose the fine job he's been after fillin' these five months past, and we'll be out his wages. Do yez think I'm goin' to stand that? I'll have satisfaction out of yer hide, begorra."

He made a rush at Ed, who slammed the door in his face and locked it.

The upper panel hit the Irishman in the face and he staggered back.

With a howl of rage he raised his foot and kicked in one of the lower panels.

Emily and her mother, who had been attracted by the Irishman's loud talk, were greatly alarmed at the visitor's violence.

"Oh, Ed, Ed, what shall we do?" cried his sister.

"I know what I'll do. I'll have him arrested and sent to the Island to keep company with his rascally son," said Ed.

A second crash announced the demolishing of the other lower panel.

The uproar brought the other tenants of that floor to their doors, as well as the tenants on the floor above to the top of the stairs.

No one attempted to interfere, so the redoubtable Mr. Finn had things all his way, and continued to make Rome howl.

He flung himself at the door with all his brawny force.

No common lock could stand such a shock.

The door gave way and the Irishman fell into the room.

Quick as a flash Ed picked up a chair and brought it down on his head.

Mr. Finn's skull was thick enough, but the blow knocked him senseless just the same, and he lay still with an ugly gash across his forehead.

Mrs. Ashton screamed and fainted, thinking her son had killed the man.

Ed had no fear that he had.

Seeing that the Irishman was down and out, he ran into the kitchen and brought a length of clothesline.

With the landing and door full of excited tenants he bound Finn hand and foot.

One of the kids of the next house had been sent by his mother to fetch a policeman.

He found a cop on the next corner and brought him to the house.

"What's the trouble here?" asked the officer, viewing the scene of damage.

"The trouble is this man, whom I never saw before, but who says he's the father of a young ruffian my testimony helped send to the Island this afternoon, came here looking for trouble. He wanted to pound the life out of me, and when I slammed the door in his face, he kicked the lower panels in and then broke in the door. As he was mad enough to commit murder, I knocked him down with a chair in self-protection, and then tied him as you see. I want you to arrest him. I will go with you and make the complaint, which I suppose will be disorderly conduct, with intent to commit an assault."

"Remove that rope," said the officer.

Ed did so.

The policeman then handcuffed the man.

"Get hold of his legs and we'll take him downstairs," he said.

The Irishman was carried to the corner saloon and some whisky poured down his throat.

That brought him around.

"Where am I?" he asked. "Did a house fall on me?"

He was told he was under arrest, and was marched off to the precinct station.

CHAPTER VI.

IN WHICH MRS. FINN TAKES A HAND.

It was the same station where Ed had given his information about the burglars, and he was recognized.

He told his story and made the charge.

"What's your name?" asked the man at the desk of the prisoner.

"Patrick Finn."

"Where do you live?"

"No. — Delancey street."

That was over near East street.

"What's your business?"

"I'm a longshoreman, and I've driven a truck."

Other questions were asked him.

"What did you go to the house on Christie street for and kick up a shindy?"

"To get square wid this young omadhaun for sindin' me son Micky to the Island this afternoon, and I'll fix him yet as soon as I get me two hands on him, the villain!" said Mr. Finn, glaring at Ed.

"Lock him up," said the lieutenant, curtly.

He was marched off to a cell and Ed returned home.

While he was away, his mother and sister entertained a crowd of sympathetic tenants.

The husband of one of them, being a carpenter, volunteered to repair the door as best he could.

He got his tools and two pieces of board.

After fixing the lock so it would hold, he nailed the board over the holes where the lower panels had been.

Ed wasn't out of trouble yet on the Italian's account.

Mrs. Patrick Finn waited in vain for her husband to come back and tell her how he had wiped the floor with the boy who had sent their son to the Island.

In the meantime she held a symposium in her tenement with half a dozen of her particular neighbors, every one of whom expressed a show of resentment against the boy who had helped to send her son away, but privately most of them regarded Mike as a young blackguard who was well out of the way.

When her husband failed to return she suspected that after properly laying out the object of their resentment he had gone and got drunk.

This was nothing unusual for him to do, and many a wallop she had received from her lord and master when she took him to task for filling his skin with rum instead of bringing the money home to her "like a dacint man."

Under this impression she went to bed around midnight.

She was getting breakfast in the morning when a boy came to her door and told her that her husband had been arrested the night before for raising cane at a house on Christie street.

At that she set up a howl and said "every wan was agin him."

As soon as she could get away she threw a shawl over her head and started for the precinct station.

Arriving there she inquired for her Patrick.

She was curtly informed that her husband stood a splendid show of going to the Island for a year, for the way he had behaved the night before.

"Sure, what did he do that should get him such a sentence?" she asked. "Did he kill the b'y?"

"No, the boy nearly killed him for breaking into his mother's rooms."

"A b'y nearly kill me Patrick! I'll not belave it. Sure, me husband could lick any six b'ys at wan time."

"Well, he's down in one of the cells with a broken head."

"Howly mother! let me go to him."

"If you want to see him you'll have to go to the police court around ten o'clock."

"Oh, husha, tin o'clock. He might die before thin."

"No fear. It would take more than one blow on the head with a chair to kill him."

"Was it a chair that hit him?"

"It was."

"And was it the b'y that threw the chair, bad luck to the young miscreant?"

"If he hadn't he might be in the morgue this morning."

"If he was it wouldn't be any more than he deserves for sindin' me son Mike to the Island yesterday."

"Go home now and be thankful there is no worse charge hanging over your husband's head. It might easily have been murder, for he was half full at the time."

Mrs. Finn tried to prevail on the lieutenant to permit her to see her husband, but he wouldn't, and she had to go away.

Instead of going home she started for the scene of the previous night's trouble.

Ed was about to start for Wall Street when she came banging at the door.

When he opened it he found a woman with blood in her eye standing outside.

"Are yez the villain who nearly killed me husband wid a chair last night?" demanded Mrs. Finn, aggressively.

"Are you Mrs. Finn?" asked Ed, foreseeing more trouble ahead.

"Faith, I am."

"Well, ma'am, I'm sorry, but——"

"May the Ould Nick fly away wid yer sorrow. What did yez hit me husband wid a chair for?"

"To save myself. He was mad enough to kill me."

"Small wonder. Didn't yez sind our Mike to the Island?"

"I admit that I testified against him. I had to."

"How had ye?"

"The police compelled me to appear because I was a witness."

"Thin ye swore to a lie whin ye said me son was a thafe."

"I beg your pardon, ma'am——"

"Faith, it's awful perlite yez are now. It's a great mind I have to wipe the flure wid yes."

"I hope you won't try to do any such thing as that," said Ed, in a conciliatory tone, for he didn't want to have a run-in with the female part of the Finn family.

"Will yez withdraw yer charge agin me husband?"

"No, madam. He behaved like a ruffian and deserves all that's coming to him."

With a howl the woman reached for him, but Ed side-stepped, slipped behind her, seized her by both arms and swung her out of the door.

He realized that he could do no more with her, for she was a strong and husky woman, and he couldn't have got her out except by taking her unawares from behind.

So he slipped back into the room and locked the door on her.

Mrs. Finn was fighting mad, and she pounded on the door and made a terrible racket, bringing all the tenants out again to see what was the matter this time.

Mrs. Ashton and her assistant were not a little frightened, but Ed told his mother to pay no attention to the racket.

"I'm going down the fire-escape," he said. "And I'll telephone for a policeman to come and chase the woman."

The fire-escape was in the front of the building, and as the Ashtons lived on the second floor, front, which was the end of the escape, Ed had to get a piece of clothes line and lower himself to the sidewalk.

His mother's assistant pulled the line up, and Ed hurried to the nearest drugstore and notified the police of the state of affairs.

An officer was sent around, but before he arrived Mrs. Finn, finding that she couldn't get in, had taken her departure, and thus saved herself from being run in for disturbing the peace.

Ed reached the office at nine o'clock, and when his boss came down he told him about the fresh trouble he had got in through his efforts as a witness the afternoon before.

"Now I have to go to court again this morning to prosecute that Irishman," he said. "It will be an inconvenience to you, sir, but it isn't my fault. Mr. Finn had no right to come around and kick our door to pieces. He ought to get a year on the Island for it."

"He deserves more than that. He might have sent you to the hospital," said Mr. Conway. "What time are you going to court?"

"I'll have to go right away. If he is brought before the magistrate without delay, I ought to get back in an hour," said Ed.

"Well, run along and get back as soon as you can," said the broker.

Finn, looking something of a wreck, was called to the bar at half-past ten.

He pleaded not guilty.

Ed told his story, and was corroborated by his mother, sister and a score of the tenants of the Christie street building.

"What have you got to say in your defence?" the judge asked the Irishman.

Finn said that Ed had testified in court the afternoon previous against his son, and got him sent to the Island for six months, that's why he went around to the Christie street house and made the fur fly.

"One year," said the magistrate. "Call the next case."

Mrs. Finn, who was in court, made a great outcry on hearing the sentence imposed on her husband.

She declared that she and the children would starve.

She was hustled out of the court, and her husband was hustled into the pen to await transportation to the wharf where the boat would carry him and other unfortunates to Blackwell's Island.

Ed returned to the office, and that afternoon he found out that Golden Giant was up to 85 cents.

Next day it went to 90, and on Saturday it closed at \$1.

It was likely to go even higher, for there were only a few thousand shares of it in the East.

Ed had been uncommonly fortunate in securing his 1,000.

The office boy heard that 2,000 shares had changed hands that morning in Jersey City at \$1.10.

That evening Ed and a messenger friend named Will Lange went to an uptown theater to see a play which had been running some time.

Ed never dreamed that they were followed by several members of the stable gang, who had sworn revenge on him for the sending away of Mike Finn.

It was a singular thing that Ed got all the credit for Mike's banishment from the city when, as a matter of fact, he had had less to do with it than Jimmy Bates or the Italian.

Patrick Finn and his wife having failed to get square with him, the stable gang took the matter up.

Their plan of action was to shadow Ed wherever he went of nights until they got the chance to do him up.

The stable gang had no idea that Ed was a scrapper, and they did not look for a great show of resistance when they got him at a disadvantage.

Two of them followed the office boy and his friend uptown to Forty-second street that Saturday evening and saw them go into a theater.

They came back and reported to their associates.

The gang figured that Ed and his friend would not return downtown until around half-past eleven, and that they would get off at the Grand street station on the Third avenue road.

At some point after that the two messengers would separate and Ed would make the rest of his way home alone.

Then the whole gang arranged to jump on him, knock him down and kick him around till he became a candidate for a hospital.

That was the way they proposed getting square with him.

They were disappointed that evening.

Ed and his friend Will got off at the Canal street station, as that was the more convenient for the latter, and Ed walked home with him.

The gang waited impatiently for them to appear at the point where they were on the lookout, but they didn't, and when the rascally bunch finally gave the matter up for that night, Ed was in bed at home unconscious of the escape he had had.

CHAPTER VII.

THE STRUGGLE ON THE ROOF.

During the following week Golden Giant mining stock went up to \$1.50 a share.

Ed was in no hurry to sell, for from all he heard about the mine the price seemed likely to hold if it didn't go much higher.

On Friday it took a jump to \$1.65.

That morning Ed learned that a syndicate of operators with a barrel of money had been formed to corner and boom L. & N. shares.

That stock was selling unusually low at this time, and the boy saw a chance to make a good haul.

In order to get the money to go in he had to sell his mining shares.

He took the certificates around to the little bank and asked the cashier if the bank would sell them and apply \$1,500 of the money as margin on 150 shares of L. & N.

The cashier agreed to oblige him, and so Ed made his deal in L. & N. at 75.

That left him with a surplus of \$200.

The stable gang had kept him under their eye at nights during the week, but no fitting chance offered to attack him.

After supper Saturday evening he took his sister to a Grand street moving picture show, and after taking her home he went around to a political club that was holding a smoker.

The platform at the club was transformed into a square "ring," with ropes, so that a lengthy programme of three-round boxing bouts could be pulled off.

The affair did not break up till midnight, and then Ed started for home.

The gang was waiting for him, and got him on Christie, just above Grand.

The whole bunch rushed out of the shadows at him, but in their eagerness to slug him they impeded one another to a certain extent, and that gave the active Ed the chance to spring on a wagon drawn up alongside the curb.

They followed him from all points, and as they came on, Ed, full of the boxing bouts he had witnessed that evening, sailed into each singly as he essayed to get a foothold on the wagon, and knocked him spinning to the ground.

His activity prevented two reaching him at one time, and his prowess with his fists kept them busy defending themselves.

Finally the toughs drew off a bit, but kept him surrounded, so he could not escape without being intercepted.

"Yer better give up," cried one of the young ruffians.

"What in thunder are you tackling me for?" asked Ed. "If you think I've got any money you're mistaken."

"Yer've got some, I guess. Hand it down and we'll let yer go," said another.

That was a bluff, as they didn't intend to let him go till they'd put him out.

"I've thirty-five cents, but you'll have to put me to sleep before you'll get it," retorted Ed.

"We'll put you to sleep all right."

"You're a nice bunch of cowards—eight of you against one."

"Come on, fellers, rush him again."

The second attack began, and this time Ed was hard put to save himself.

He received several hard knocks, and only that every one of his blows counted he would have been downed.

In the midst of the scrimmage a policeman appeared, and two of the bunch were captured, the rest making good their escape.

The pair were taken to the precinct and recognized as members of the stable gang.

They were locked up and Ed appeared against them next morning.

They were sent to the Island for three months.

Their fate did not deter their associates from carrying on their vendetta against Ed.

In fact, they were all the more bitter against him.

With Mike and two of his friends on the Island there were still a dozen left to push the feud.

Ed, however, was always on the lookout against them, so they found it advisable to lay low and await their opportunity.

It was about this time that Ed heard that one of the men, the chief crook, who had robbed the Grand street hardware store, had been released on bail.

He did not pay any particular attention to that fact.

The rascal had not forgotten him, and as he was the chief

witness against him and his companion, he began laying pipes to get him out of the way.

In the course of a week L. & N. commenced to rise.

It went to 80, then fluctuated for a day or two and dropped back to 76.

Next day it fell to 74, then rose to 77.

At the end of ten days it was up to 80, and from that point its advance was steady but slow till it reached 85, when it began to boom and ran up to 95 in a day.

That occasioned the usual excitement attending a rising stock, and the army of small speculators came out of their holes and began buying.

Ed followed his stock closely, for he had \$1,500 up, and no matter how sure his tip looked to be, he knew there was always a chance of things going wrong.

He figured that a profit of \$20 a share was good enough for anybody in his position, for it represented \$3,000, and he ordered the little bank to sell him out.

So rapid was the rise at that point that before his orders were executed the price went up two points more, and he made \$300 more than he calculated on.

When the bank settled with him he found himself in possession of a certificate of deposit which he could cash at any time for \$5,000.

Thus inside of six weeks his capital had jumped to that sum from \$425.

It seemed almost too good to be true, but an inspection of the certificate showed him that there were no strings to his financial standing.

"Heavens!" he ejaculated, "mother and sis will jump several inches when they learn how much I am worth. I don't believe they'd take my word for it, though they know I am not in the habit of telling untruths. However, I have the evidence to convince them. I wonder what they'll say? I also wonder what my boss would say if he knew what I've made out of stocks. I'm pretty solid with him, but for all that it wouldn't do to put him wise. He'd make me cut out speculation for the future, and I wouldn't be able to win any more."

In his enthusiasm Ed didn't think how much easier it was to lose the \$5,000 he had made than to add to it.

When he finished his supper that evening he sat back in his chair with his thumbs stuck in the arm-holes of his vest.

"Good folks," he said, complacently, "do you know it feels pretty good to be worth \$5,000."

"Are you worth so much as that?" asked his sister, with a laugh.

"I certainly am—every cent of it," he replied.

"Listen to that, mother," said Emily. "He tells it very well indeed."

"I judge that you are skeptical as to the fact, Emily," said Ed.

"We wouldn't doubt you for the world," she answered.

"That's right. Always remember that when I say a thing it's so."

"Certainly. Are you going to buy an automobile and take mother and me out Sunday afternoons?"

"Hardly. I don't want to create a riot in the neighborhood. The neighbors wouldn't recover from the shock in a month."

"I agree with you. There wouldn't be a window in the block without a head."

"Just as if there was a funeral, eh? So we'll cut out the auto. I'll tell you what I'll do, I'll give mother an order to make you and herself a new dress each, and produce the cash to buy the material and the fixings. I will also pay for new hats, shoes and anything else you feel that you both want."

"Isn't that a lovely dream!"

"It will be no dream when I show you the mazuma to pay for the goods."

"When is all this going to happen?"

"Just as soon as you people are ready to avail yourselves of my offer."

"I'm ready now. I need a new hat and a new gown, not to mention other things I'd like to have."

"Don't I come in on this?" asked his brother Bob, who had been silent up to this point.

"Sure. You shall have a new suit, hat and shoes, too," replied Ed.

"Have you been making a stake in Wall Street?" asked Bob.

"I have."

"Really?" asked Emily, with some eagerness.

"Yes."

"Enough to treat us in the way you spoke about?"

"Several times over, and still leave a balance to buy a house and lot with in the suburbs."

"The proof of the pudding is in the eating," said Bob. "You call my bluff, do you? Well, I have a full hand, and here it is."

Thus speaking, Ed produced his certificate of deposit. He passed it around, and you may believe it created a sensation.

That Ed was actually worth \$5,000 seemed past belief, but the proof was down in black and white, and there was no going behind it.

Of course, they wanted to know how he had come in possession of so much money, and he gave them a full explanation.

The Ashton family felt like millionaires that evening.

On the following afternoon the cashier handed Ed a heavy tin box and told him it contained \$5,000 in gold.

"Take it around to the Sub-treasury and get notes for it," said Mr. Brown.

Ed started on his errand.

As he walked out into the corridor he ran against a man with a bearded face.

The man uttered an ejaculation, snatched the box out of Ed's hand, hit him a blow in the face that sent him staggering against the wall and rushed away.

At that moment Will Lange and Jimmy Bates came from the elevator and saw what happened.

They tried to head the man off, but he evaded them and ran upstairs.

Jimmy dropped his papers and tagged after him, and for a lame boy his movements were uncommonly nimble.

The man's intention was to take a down elevator at a floor above, but he couldn't do it with the newsboy at his heels, so he kept on up, hoping to shake the lad off.

Ed quickly recovered himself and started after the thief, too, followed by Will Lange, who was as excited almost as Ed himself, for the theft was a daring piece of business.

"Take the elevator up and cut him off," Ed shouted back at Will.

Lange stopped and followed his orders.

Ed rapidly overtook Jimmy, who couldn't stand the pace.

"Where is the rascal?" Ed asked.

"He's up to the next floor by this time," replied Jimmy.

Ed put on a spurt and Jimmy fell behind.

The building was an old one of seven stories, overlooked by the neighboring skyscrapers.

Will went as far as the elevator did, and, then getting out, rushed over to the stairway with the elevator boy.

In a few minutes the thief with the box in his hand came in sight.

He stopped on seeing the two above waiting to cut him off.

He darted for the sixth floor elevator.

The car that should have been coming down was the one Will came up on, and it was stalled above.

Seeing the move the man made, Will dashed down the flight.

The elevator boy rushed to his cage to go down that way.

Ed hove in sight at the foot of the fifth flight.

When the elevator came down the boy opened the door to rush out and collided with the man as he sprang in.

The boy went down on the floor of the elevator.

The man slammed the door in Will's face, pulled the rope to go down, but instead of doing that the cage went up to the next floor.

He managed to stop it, stepped out, jerked the rope the other way and the elevator started down.

Leaving the gate open, he rushed away, looking for a way to reach the roof.

Ed reached the door in time to see him vanish around a corner.

He raced after him.

The man ran for dear life and came to the stairs leading to the roof.

He ran up them, hastily unhooked the scuttle and sprang out.

Before he could slam down the cover Ed was there, grabbing him by the leg.

In the struggle Ed pulled himself through and the man was forced to drop the box to defend himself.

"Blame you, let me go!" cried the man, trying to punch Ed in the face.

"Not on your life, you thief! I'm going to land you in jail for this," said the office boy.

They swayed about on the roof locked in each other's arms.

The man tripped Ed up.

As the boy fell he caught the fellow by his beard, and it came away in his hand.

Then Ed recognized him as the Grand street hardware store robber.

"I know you, you scoundrel!" ejaculated Ed.

"You have spoken your death warrant. I'll throw you off the roof."

As the man tried to drag Ed to the parapet, the office boy regained his feet and the fight for the mastery began afresh.

When Jimmy and Will came up through the scuttle they were staggered by the sight that met their eyes.

Ed and the young crook were struggling on the very edge of the roof in imminent peril of their lives.

CHAPTER VIII.

MORE TROUBLE WITH THE GANGSTERS.

"Oh, heaven!" cried Will, panic-stricken at the sight. "They'll be over."

Jimmy had more presence of mind, and was equal to the emergency.

"Quick! We must grab dem and pull dem back," he said.

He darted forward, and at a great risk to himself laid hold of Ed and began to pull with all his might.

Will hustled over to his aid, and between them they got the struggling pair away from the parapet.

Jimmy slipped down and seized the crook by the legs, while Will threw one arm around his neck and pulled his head back.

The crook let go of Ed, and that enabled the office boy to get a better hold on him.

The three got him down on his back and held him there.

His hands were tied by Ed with a handkerchief, and then they dragged him to the scuttle.

"Jimmy, run down and tell the cashier in my office to telephone for a policeman. Tell him what has happened, and that I've got the thief on the roof, and that the box of gold is all right," said Ed.

Down went Jimmy to the top floor and the elevator.

There he met the cage coming up with the janitor and one of his helpers.

"They've got him on the roof," said Jimmy, as he stepped into the car.

The car took him down to the third floor, where he got off and ran into Conway's office.

He put the cashier wise to the situation in half a minute and a clerk was directed to telephone for an officer.

The janitor and his assistant went to the roof and found Ed and Will in charge of the crook.

"Get him down to the floor below and put him on the elevator," said Ed to the janitor.

"What's he been up to?" asked the janitor.

"Snatched that tin box out of my hand and tried to get away with it," said Ed. "He's a professional crook. I know him."

The man was taken down from the roof, put on his feet, and ordered into the elevator.

He went, for he knew it wouldn't be of any use for him to refuse.

He was taken down to the office where he was held till a policeman came and took charge of him.

Then Ed carried the gold to the Sub-treasury and brought back the bills.

"It is getting to be a steady thing for me to attend court," grinned Ed. "This will be the fourth time in seven weeks."

Next morning he and the cashier went to the Tombs, and when the prisoner was brought up to the bar the magistrate recognized him as the Grand street hardware robber, who had been out on bail for his other crime.

He was remanded to the Tombs.

That afternoon one of Ed's young lady friends, stenographer to a big operator, met him on the street, and after a short talk together she told him that O. & H. stock was being cornered by a pool, and if he wanted to make some money could not do better than get behind a deal on it.

Knowing that the girl was in a position to get hold of accurate information of the kind, Ed determined to take a chance on it.

Accordingly, next day he bought 250 shares of O. & H. at 80. That took half of his money, leaving the other half to protect his deal in case the price slumped and he was called for additional margin.

The stable gang still continued to keep Ed in mind.

They didn't watch him as closely as they had been doing, but they managed to keep a line on him.

Sunday came around two days after Ed got in on his last deal, and he and Will took a walk along the East River.

The stable gang stood in with a rough crowd known as the "Water Rats."

When Ed and Will reached a certain part of the river front they were spotted by two members of the stable gang, who were hobnobbing with a bunch of Water Rats.

The gangsters were not in the habit of attacking any one in daylight except under particularly favorable conditions.

Their deeds being of the dark kind, they worked under the cover of night.

The two stable gangsters pointed Ed out to the Water Rats, and it was decided to take a chance on him.

They hid behind a pile of lumber on the wharf, and at a given signal they suddenly surrounded Ed and Will.

Ed put up a fight, but a clout over the head with a stick of wood put the office boy out of business.

Will was bundled into the midst of the lumber and held there.

A small sloop was hauled up alongside the wharf.

Ed was taken on board of it, his arms tied behind his back, and he was dumped on top of a locker.

The whole crowd went aboard the sloop, which the Water Rats determined to take without consulting the owner.

Sail was hoisted on board of the sloop, and she was presently sailing up the river in the direction of the Sound.

Ed took it for granted that he had fallen into the hands of the stable gang, though he had not supposed they were hanging out along the river front.

He was soon aware that the boat was in motion, and he was satisfied the toughs were carrying him off somewhere.

It would have been a waste of time on his part to speculate on the destination of the craft, so he did not attempt to do so.

As he couldn't help himself out of his predicament, he had to let matters take their course.

The sail proved to be a long one, during which the young ruffian skylarked about the deck.

They finally put in at an island opposite the Bronx, with which they were apparently acquainted.

Three of the gang went to the main land in a rowboat which belonged to the sloop and had been trailing behind.

They were gone for an hour, but when they came back they brought several bottles of lager and some food.

A part of this provender they consumed, and the rest was put into one of the cabin lockers.

The sloop then continued on her way.

In the course of a couple of hours she put in at another island near the junction of the river with the Sound.

This island was a wooded one, and perhaps a third of a mile from the nearest shore.

The sloop was made fast, Ed was taken from the cabin and carried ashore to a small shanty among the trees.

He was tied to an upright and left.

The boys returned to the sloop and sailed back the way they had come.

Ed, left alone, tried to release himself, but he could not.

It looked as if he was doomed to stay there until somebody came there and released him.

The island did not often have visitors, so that the office boy stood a good chance of remaining there indefinitely, which meant starvation and death.

Fate, however, was kind to Ed and interfered in his behalf.

An hour later a flat boat holding three boys came that way. The boat was beached and the boys went ashore.

They had been fishing for a couple of hours and they decided to build a fire and cook and eat the fish instead of taking it home.

Fuel was collected and the fire started.

The fish were cleaned and laid upon the coals.

While one of the lads remained to watch the cooking, the other two strolled over to the shanty.

Ed heard their voices and shouted for help.

The boys, somewhat startled by the cry, stopped and looked at each other.

"There's something going on in that house," said one of them. "We may get into trouble if we go there."

Ed shouted again.

"Let's look in and see what's wrong with the chap," said the other. "Maybe he's alone."

They cautiously approached the shanty and glanced in through the half-open door.

They saw the office boy and the predicament he was in.

No one else appeared to be there, so they gathered courage and entered.

"Cut me loose, will you, fellows?" asked Ed.

"Who tied you up that way?" asked one of the lads, getting out his knife.

"A gang of New York toughs. They brought me here on a sloop from the lower part of the city," explained Ed.

"What did they do that for?"

"I couldn't tell you. I was walking on one of the docks with a friend when the crowd jumped on us and knocked us down. I don't know what they did with my friend, but they carried me aboard the sloop, tied my hands behind me and sailed away. They put in some place for a while and afterward came on here. They fetched me off the sloop and left me here as you see. That's the last I saw of them."

By that time the office boy was free, and he thanked his deliverers.

"Much obliged to you, fellows," he said. "Sorry I can't give you something for helping me out of my trouble, but the rascals took all the change I had in my pocket, which I'm glad to say wasn't a great deal."

"That's all right. We don't want anything. Are you hungry?"

"I should say I was. Haven't eaten since I had my breakfast this morning."

"Come along. We are cooking a mess of fish we caught. You shall have your share."

Ed eagerly accepted their invitation to eat with them, and went with them down to the shore where the odor of the cooking fish made his mouth water.

His appearance on the island was explained to the other lad.

"Lucky for you we came ashore here," he said. "You might have stayed here till you starved to death."

The fish, done to a turn, were served up.

The boys had brought some potatoes and salt with them in expectation of having an alfresco meal.

Ed ate like a hungry boy and was accorded the larger share in consideration of the fact that he was half famished.

After the meal they remained a while on the island and then they rowed to the main shore.

They landed on the shore of Pelham Bay, for the boys lived on farms in that neighborhood.

One of the boys took Ed to his home, where he told his story.

He was treated to supper, and then the farmer hitched up his light wagon, and his son drove the office boy to Pelham Manor, where he got a trolley car, which eventually landed him at the terminus of the Third avenue elevated road by the way of Mount Vernon, the farmer having given him a quarter to pay his way home.

It was well along in the evening when he reached home, where he found his folks in a great stew over him.

After telling his story he went to the precinct station and repeated it there.

He learned that Will Lange had reported the affair shortly after the sloop left on her trip up the river, for no effort was made to detain him, the whole business seemingly being aimed at Ed.

He gave a description of the boys, and a detective was out watching for their return.

The result of this attempt to do up Ed was that two more of the stable gang and two of the Water Rats found their way to the Island for six months.

CHAPTER IX.

THE FOG AND WHAT LED UP TO IT.

A week passed before there was any marked movement in O. & H., and then it went up by degrees to 87.

At that point it attracted the attention of the Street, and rapidly developed into one of the usual Wall Street booms.

Ed held on till the price went to 95, when he sold out. He collected a profit of about \$3,700.

One of the first things he did was to present the stenographer who had given him the tip with \$500, as evidence of his appreciation.

This present was a surprise to the girl, for she had not looked for anything from him, and she promised to hand him the next tip that came her way.

Ed was now worth \$8,000, and he felt as if he was a person of some importance.

No one in Wall Street was aware of his good luck, for he was careful to keep his business to himself.

He had warned his mother, sister and brother to say nothing about the money he had made, and they obeyed his injunction.

When he told them that he had made \$3,000 more they began to have visions of a home of their own somewhere up in the Bronx.

Emily wanted Ed to turn the money over to their mother so she could use it to the best advantage, but he declined to fall in with her views.

He said the money was his, and he intended to use it to make more.

As he appeared to be doing well with it, his sister did not press the matter.

Had she been up in Wall Street matters she would have been much disturbed over the chances he was taking with his funds.

She and her mother knew nothing about the financial district except what Ed told them from time to time, and so they did not dream of the risk he took when he backed a deal.

The boom in O. & H. led to a sudden drop all around as soon as the pool sold out its holdings, and the market became as flat as a pancake.

A number of the brokers took advantage of the stagnant condition to go off hunting or fishing for a few days.

Ed's boss was invited to join a party of four on a ducking trip down on the Chesapeake Bay.

A large sloop-yacht was chartered for a week, and as it was proposed to take a boy along to help with the guns and decoys, Mr. Conway proposed to take Ed.

This suited the lad immensely.

A week's vacation with pay would appeal to any boy.

He had never been far from New York, and so he was greatly tickled at the idea of going down on the Chesapeake.

His mother put up no material objection when she learned he was going in the company of his employer and three other Wall Street gentlemen, though she did not like to have him away from home.

The party boarded the yacht at Erie Basin early on Saturday afternoon, and no time was lost in getting under way.

Their course would take them down the coast of New Jersey to the Delaware Bay, up that body of water into the Delaware River, and thence to the canal, through which they would reach the far upper reaches of the Chesapeake.

They could, of course, have taken the more open route straight down to the entrance of the great bay, and then sailed up as far as they wanted to go; but this would have made the trip longer, and have exposed them to rougher weather.

The yacht was a fast boat, and as they had a good breeze with them from the start, they were off Cape May at sunrise next morning.

They made the balance of the run to the canal inside of seven hours, and by dark were sailing down the Elk River, a tributary of Chesapeake Bay.

The yacht followed the eastern shore of Maryland down, and finally anchored off a creek about thirty miles across from Baltimore.

The party was aroused long before daylight, and when Ed tumbled out on deck, to use a nautical expression, he found the craft surrounded by a light mist.

The boat was alongside with a bunch of decoys in the bottom.

Hot coffee and biscuits were served and then the party embarked with their guns.

The gentleman who headed the party was thoroughly familiar with the shooting ground, and after the landing was made up the creek he and Ed went out a little way and set the decoys on the water, where they floated at anchor as natural as life.

The mist did not lie upon the water, but ended six or eight feet above, so that the surface of the cove was quite clear.

The shooters deployed and then sank out of sight, leaving Ed in the boat, concealed behind a bank of rushes.

Ere long there was heard a rush of wings in the air, and presently out of the mist a dozen ducks dropped to the water about the decoys.

They sailed about in fancied security.

Then came four flashes and attendant reports, and five ducks were hit.

The others rose in alarm and sailed off in the mist.

Two of the ducks were dead and three were wounded.

Ed at once rowed out to secure them all.

Only one gave him any trouble.

It was not so badly hurt but it could fly low in spurts, and Ed followed it some little distance, expecting to be able to grab it every moment.

It eluded him and disappeared among the rushes.

He pushed in after it, but it kept ahead of him in spite of his best efforts.

"I'll get you yet," he said, determinedly, paddling further and further into the marsh.

At length he lost the duck altogether, and moved this way and that searching for it.

He couldn't find it, and hearing a succession of shots in the distance, he reluctantly gave up the hunt and started to make his way out of the marsh.

The mist, however, had grown thicker and descended closer to the water.

Ed rowed in the direction he had heard the shots, but being compelled to make frequent detours to avoid little islands that he encountered, he got all mixed up in his bearings, and when he finally ran into a clearer stretch of water, he pulled away from his party instead of toward the hunters.

The mist finally got so thick that he couldn't see beyond the boat itself.

The shooting had ceased altogether, for the same conditions prevailed in the cove, and the decoys could not even be seen.

Ducks came and went invisibly.

The brokers looked for Ed and the boat, but neither could be found, though they shouted vigorously.

"I'm afraid he's got lost among the rushes," said one.

They began firing at intervals to attract the boy's notice.

By that time Ed was so far away that he did not notice the firing.

He knew he was lost in the marsh, for he should have made his way out of it long before.

"It's the fog," he muttered.

It wasn't so much the mist as the devious channels he had been forced to follow that had carried him out of his right course.

Daylight came, but it only served to lighten up the mist, which was now thicker than ever.

He ceased rowing, deeming it a useless labor, and the boat rested among the reeds.

The tide, which was rising, carried the craft slowly onward deeper into the trackless waste of water and rushes.

Finally the boat ran up against an obstruction and swung around against it.

Ed tried to see what it was, but couldn't on account of the mist.

He felt of it with an oar and judged it was another small island, though it appeared to be larger than any he had so far run across.

Pushing the oar down into the ooze, he shoved the boat along a little way, but found it was still up against the land.

He kept on, but could not get away from what he had judged was an island, so he began to think it was not an island at all, but one side of the marsh.

As soon as he arrived at this conclusion he stepped out on the solid ground.

With the painter in his hand he felt around for something to tie it to, and not finding anything he walked cautiously forward, dragging the boat along.

At length he met with a small tree and tied the painter to it.

He returned to the boat and sat down.

He did not dare venture away from it in the mist, for he would be sure to lose it and himself as well in the muck.

"This is an adventure I didn't bargain for," he said to himself. "I wouldn't have got into it if it hadn't been for that wounded duck I was determined to capture, and, after all, I didn't get it. The gentlemen won't be able to get any of the ducks they shoot without me, and they'll bless my awkwardness in losing myself."

A glint of light shot through the mist.

It was the rising sun.

Ed hoped the mist would now clear away.

In the course of half an hour it had thinned out perceptibly, and he could see phantom trees at a short distance.

Far away in the distance the round sun rose above a low-lying hill, looking misty and uncertain.

But this condition didn't last long.

The air cleared rapidly, and almost before Ed realized it the air was as clear as he had ever seen it.

All around on one side lay the marsh, on the other a landscape thick with trees, and among them he perceived a small house.

Believing it was inhabited, he walked toward it, taking one of the oars to plant in a line with the boat as a guide for him when he came back.

The house was less than a quarter of a mile away, so it did not take him long to reach it.

He knocked on the door, but no one came.

He went to a window on the ground floor and looked in, but though the room was furnished with old-fashioned chairs and other things, indicating occupancy, no one was inside.

Going around to the rear, to the door of a one-story addition, he pounded there with no better result.

"I guess the people are away. Or maybe it's too early yet for them to be up, though I hardly think that. Judging from the length of time I've been away from the yacht, I should say it was easily eight o'clock," thought Ed.

He tried both doors and found them locked.

He threw pebbles at the upper windows, producing no effect.

"The people are certainly away," he said. "That's too bad, for I don't see another house anywhere in sight. I'd like to know where I am, and I'd like to get the bearings of the creek so I can get back to it as soon as possible."

He decided to walk on and see if he could find another house.

He found that the trees beyond were the outskirts of a dense wood that swept around to the right and left for some distance.

How far the wood extended straight ahead he couldn't give a guess even after walking into it a short way.

He turned about and returned to the house.

Looking through one of the windows again, he saw a clock ticking away.

It showed the time as a quarter to nine.

He was feeling pretty hungry by this time.

He sat down on the inclined flap or cover to the cellar entrance.

The wood began to yield under his weight, and, fearing it would collapse, he started to get up when the whole business gave way and he went down amid a shower of rotten wood and punky dust.

He fell only a few feet, fortunately, but even at that he was lucky in escaping injury.

He might easily have broken an arm or sprained one of his legs.

He got up and looked around.

The beams of the cellar were so low that they almost brushed his head.

It was full of dirt and cobwebs and old junk.

He saw a short flight of steps and he concluded to go up to the first floor.

The steps took him into a little entry where there were two doors—one leading into the kitchen, the other into the living room where the clock was.

After glancing into the former he entered the other room.

A newspaper a month old lay on the table.

The chairs were stuffed with horsehair, and there was an old-time dresser containing a set of blue dishes, cups and saucers of the same color, and other articles to match.

"I guess I'll take a squint upstairs," he thought, "then I'll look into the larder, if there is one, as I should imagine there was, and see what I can find to eat. I've got the funds to pay for whatever I take."

He ran upstairs and found three doors opening on the landing.

He opened the nearest and, to his surprise, found it was a kind of chemical laboratory.

A shelf ran around three sides of the room, and this was filled with retorts, strange-shaped glass vessels, measuring glasses, bottles filled with different colored liquors, and other bottles, well stoppered, holding nothing, apparently.

There were also a row of bottles filled with alcohol, or some preparation of the kind, and holding specimens of birds, very small animals, and shapeless articles that were meaningless to Ed.

Suspended from the ceiling was a stuffed baby alligator.

The man of the house is something of a scientist, I guess," he said, after taking in the contents of the room. "Rather odd to find such a collection out in a lonesome part of the country."

Ed opened the door of a closet and was startled to see a fully articulated skeleton hanging there, but in so natural a way that it seemed about to step out into the room.

"Gosh! That gave me a start. I never saw a complete skeleton before except in a picture. It looks rather creepy."

He shut the door, walked out of the room and tried the next door.

An oblong library table stood in the center of the floor.

It was covered with books and papers.

On one side of the room was an old-fashioned book-case filled with scientific works.

There were four chairs and other articles of furniture in the room, but none of these things at that moment took Ed's attention.

One thing alone filled his gaze.

That was the figure of an old man seated at the table and gazing straight at him with the glassy stare of a corpse.

CHAPTER X.

THE DEAD MAN AND THE DEAD MINING STOCK.

Ed had not expected to find any one in the house, and when he opened the door and stepped in he uttered an ejaculation of surprise, thinking the figure was alive, and had looked up to see who the intruder was.

It didn't take him but a moment or two to realize that the man was dead.

After recovering from the shock of the discovery, Ed walked into the room and out of line with the deadman's eyes.

The fact that no one else was on the premises gave the boy the impression that the old man had been living there alone—a recluse or hermit.

He had died while in the act of writing, and Ed approached the body to see what he had been putting on paper when the summons of Death interrupted him.

This is what he read:

"Know all men by these presents that I, John Wilcox, being of sound mind, but feeling the hand of Death clutching at my heart, do hereby will and bequeath my body, for experimental purposes, to the Johns Hopkins Hospital; also the entire contents of this house which I hold under a lease, to be sold, or otherwise disposed of, for the benefit of the same institution, with the single reservation of the tin box and its contents standing on this table, and bearing the initials 'J. W.' That I herewith convey to the person finding my dead body, on the single condition that he notify the proper authorities of my demise, and forward this paper to Professor Whiting, of the Johns Hopkins College, at Baltimore, Md., without delay.

JOHN WILCOX."

"I wonder what's in the box?" thought Ed, much interested, since under the conditions of the paper, which he intended to comply with, the tin box became his property.

The key stood in the lock, so he had no difficulty in looking into it.

It held certificates representing 10,000 shares in the Silver Crescent Mining and Milling Co., of Tonopah, Nevada.

Ed didn't remember ever having heard of the mine, and he judged that his prize was of little value.

However, he took possession of it, also of the document the old man had written, and after looking into the front room and finding it was the occupant's sleeping quarters, went down stairs and looked for something to eat.

He found the greater part of a roasted chicken, some fresh-made biscuits, some canned stuff and other things.

He made a hasty meal and returned to the boat.

Pushing off, he pulled straight ahead through the marsh, hoping to strike the creek on the other side.

After a long and tedious stretch of rowing he came out into open water.

Following the run of the tide, which he believed was in the direction of the bay, he pulled with fresh zeal.

He soon sighted a cove which looked like the one the shooting party had stopped at to shoot that morning.

The decoys had vanished, and there was no one in sight.

He kept on to the bay, and in ten minutes sighted the yacht lying at anchor.

He rowed out toward her, and was immediately seen by one of the two sailors brought along to navigate the craft.

"Hello!" cried the sailor as he came alongside, "were you lost in the marsh?"

"Yes," replied Ed. "I just got out of it a little while ago."

"The gentlemen have gone off with the skipper and the other hand looking for you. As you had the boat, they couldn't return to the yacht till they walked back to the shore and signaled to be taken off, when the other boat was sent for them."

Ed tossed the four ducks on board and followed himself while the man was talking.

At that moment the cook, who also officiated as the steward, came on deck.

Ed recounted his adventures, omitting that part connected with the lone house in which sat the dead scientist, and the sailor remarked that he thought Ed should have got out of the marsh as soon as the sun rose and chased the mist away.

A bunch of rockets lay on the skylight.

The sailor fixed one of these in an iron holder forward and set it off as the agreed upon signal that the boy had got back to the yacht.

He set off three rockets altogether.

They could not be followed with the eye as they took their upward flight, and could hardly be seen when they exploded on high, but they each made a booming sound loud enough to attract attention, particularly from those who were expecting to hear them.

Twenty minutes later the other boat hove in sight at the mouth of the creek.

"Well, young man, give an account of yourself," said the ruling spirit of the party, when the gentlemen stepped on board. "You got lost in the marsh, of course. How came you to do it?"

"On your first fire you shot five ducks. I got four of them, and while chasing the fifth, which was wounded in one wing, I entered the marsh, and when I finally lost the bird I found I had also lost my bearings."

"But we shouted and fired our guns to attract your attention as soon as we discovered that you and the boat were missing."

"I heard some firing, and rowed, as I supposed, in that direction, but I must have got twisted around, for I heard no more, and in the end I fetched up against solid ground at the other side of the marsh, some distance away."

"How is it you didn't find your way out as soon as the sun got up?"

"I was ashore on the land at that time, and in looking around I saw a house on this side of a dense wood. I made a curious discovery there, and that will account for my delay in getting back."

"What was the discovery?"

"A dead man, who was evidently the only occupant of the place."

"Indeed! Tell us about him."

Ed told his story and exhibited the tin box and its contents as evidence.

The writing was passed around and read by all.

Then the mining shares were looked at and pronounced absolutely valueless.

"That mine went up the spout two years ago," said one of the brokers. "A promoter sold 100,000 shares in the East at ten cents, and this is doubtless a part of that batch. The mine never amounted to anything, though it was listed on the Goldfield Exchange for a year or more, and traded in to some extent out West. A few sales were made on the Curb, and probably in Jersey City as well, but as a trading proposition it amounted to nothing. The greater part of the people who invested through the promoter simply sank their money in the certificates. Your price amounts to nothing. I wouldn't give a dollar for every share that was sold in the East."

Ed was somewhat disappointed, but after all he could hardly expect to get much for the small service required of him.

"Well," he said, "I don't care. We ought to notify the authorities around here that the man is dead, and if the hospital wants his body it should be informed at once so that it can be taken away as soon as possible."

"Mr. Warren, the leader of the party, agreed with Ed, so the sloop's anchor was hoisted, sail made and the vessel run into the nearest place, a short distance to the south.

Here information was given of the man's death.

They learned that the dead man was known as Professor Wilcox, a recluse, who had been connected with the Johns Hopkins College for many years.

The village authorities said they would take charge of the professor's effects and bring his body to that place, pending its final disposition.

Broker Warren told them he would run over to Baltimore and notify Professor Whiting of the College at once, and perhaps return with somebody authorized to look after the corpse and the dead man's effects.

At five o'clock that afternoon, after a long run up the Potapscow River, the sloop-yacht anchored in the harbor of Baltimore, near the ferry slip at the foot of South Broadway.

Broker Warren and Ed took a cab and were carried up that

street to the hospital, where they got Professor Whiting's address, and then drove to his house.

He was asked if he knew Professor Wilcox.

"He is an old and valued friend of mine," replied the professor.

"You know, I suppose, that he has been living a retired life on the eastern shore of this State?"

"Yes. The death of his wife caused him to withdraw wholly from society."

"I regret to inform you that he is dead," said Broker Warren.

"I am sorry to hear it," said the professor. "When did he die?"

"Presumably some time last night. But this young man, Edward Ashton, can give you the particulars, as he discovered the body."

Ed recounted how he was lost in the marsh that morning before daylight, owing chiefly to the thick mist which prevailed in that vicinity until after sunrise.

He told how he landed in sight of the house where Professor Wilcox made his home; how he fell into the cellar and then went through the house, finding the dead man its only occupant, and how he had taken away a sheet of writing meant for immediate delivery to his listener, Professor Whiting, together with a tin box, which, with its contents he had appropriated under the terms of the said writing.

He further said that if any objection was offered to his retaining the box and its contents, which consisted of 10,000 shares of Silver Crescent Mining and Milling Co. stock, having no market value whatever, as the mine was out of business, he was ready to turn them over to the professor.

He had brought the box along, and it was handed to the gentleman.

Mr. Warren, as an authority on mining stocks, told the professor that the shares were absolutely worthless, a fact he could easily ascertain by communicating with the Goldfield Exchange.

"Worthless or not, it specifically states here that the finder of the writer's body is to have the box and its contents," said Professor Whiting, "so, young man, I will not attempt to deprive you of them. I will start for Rock Hall at once and take charge of the professor's body and his effects."

"I will take you there in my yacht, if you wish, Professor Whiting," said Mr. Warren, "if you are prepared to start this evening. We are on a shooting trip in that neighborhood."

The professor accepted the invitation, and agreed to be at the wharf at a certain hour to meet the boat that would be sent to take him off to the yacht.

He was duly on hand, and the yacht sailed down the Potapscow that evening, and anchored off Rock Hall early next morning.

When he was called to breakfast he found that he had to eat by himself, as the shooting party had been dropped at the mouth of the creek at four that morning to take up their interrupted sport.

After breakfast the professor was rowed ashore, and then the yacht sailed up to the creek and came to anchor there in time to take the sportsmen aboard for their breakfast.

No mist interfered with them that morning, and they had bagged a large number of ducks.

The party remained in the Chesapeake until Friday, when they returned to New York by the same route, arriving on Sunday, very well satisfied with their trip.

CHAPTER XI.

IN BAD HANDS.

Ed took the tin box with the mining shares home and showed them to his folks.

He told how he came by them.

"You are an awfully fortunate boy," said his sister. "How much is that stock worth?"

"It is worth nothing," replied Ed.

"Nothing!" ejaculated his sister.

"It probably cost the dead professor ten cents a share, or \$1,000, but since he came in possession of it the mine has gone to pot, and I couldn't sell the whole business to-day as it stands for one dollar."

"The corpse worked a bunco game on you, then," said his brother.

"Oh, I don't know. The professor may have believed that the stock was worth enough to pay for the service he asked;

or that it might some day come back to life as a mining proposition," said Ed.

"He'll never come back to life himself," grinned Bob.

"No. And Broker Warren says there isn't much likelihood that the mine will come back, either."

"What good are the shares, then?"

"They're no good."

"What are you going to do with them?"

"Keep them and the box as a memento of my trip to the Chesapeake."

Ed stowed the tin box away in the bottom of his trunk and thought little more about it and its contents.

After a family conference it was decided to buy a small house somewhere up in the Bronx and move up there.

They were all glad of the chance to leave the lower East Side, where the society was not to their liking.

Emily was to give up working outside and help her mother keep house, and so as soon as work slackened up in the dress-making line Mrs. Ashton began looking for a house that came within the scope of their desires, and the sum Ed had agreed to turn over to his mother to make the purchase.

In the meanwhile, Ed kept his eyes open for another chance to add to his working capital.

He had placed \$3,000 to his mother's credit in a bank, for her to draw upon when she had selected the house, and this left him with \$5,000 to operate with.

One day he noticed that M. & W. was getting active, and he bought 250 shares of it at 79 at the little bank.

In a week it went up to 83 and a fraction, and the office boy decided to sell.

This deal added \$1,000 to his wad, which he now kept in a safe deposit vault.

About this time the trial of the crook and his associate came on for the Grand street robbery.

He had also been indicted for the Wall Street business, too, but this was pigeon-holed for the present.

He and his companion were convicted chiefly on the testimony of the officers who surprised them in the stable, and the evidence of the stolen tools and money found upon them at the time.

Ed was used merely as a leading-up witness to show how the men had been captured through his agency.

The crook got six years and his companion four.

As soon as he had served his time he would be arrested on the Wall Street charge, and tried for that.

There was hardly any doubt that he would be convicted and get ten years more.

After making allowance for good behavior rebate, he would have to put in nearly eleven years of actual time, which would keep him out of mischief a good while.

During the last week in May the copper market took on a rise.

The Ashton family had just moved into their new home up near Tremont, which was almost wholly refurnished.

It was a cozy little modern cottage with some ground at the back where they could raise vegetables if they chose, and fruit, too.

The small space in front was planted with flowers and other shrubs not yet in bloom, but which was bound to present a pleasing effect in the summer.

Bob had to go way down to the East Side every school day to finish out his time until graduation day released him from study for good.

That was no great hardship for him, as he faced but a month of it.

Ed got the tip of what was going to happen in copper from his stenographer friend, and she put him on to the best stock to buy.

That was Montana Copper, which was going at \$10.

Ed put the whole of his money into it, buying 600 shares outright and getting possession of the certificates.

He was now in a position to hold on as long as he chose, and had no interest charges to worry him.

A week later the copper situation began to develop, and the first rise in Montana came the day before Decoration Day, when it went up to \$10.50.

Next day being a holiday, there was nothing doing in Wall Street.

Ed and his friend Will arranged to take a trip down to Great South Bay to call on Will's uncle, who had a farm in that neighborhood.

As he was riding uptown in the elevated train, Ed saw a paragraph in the newspaper announcing the escape of Patrick Finn and his son Mike from the Island.

Mike's time was two-thirds up, and he made a fool of him-

self in skipping with his father, for he and his old man were pretty certain to be caught, and they would both have to pay for taking French leave.

Next morning Ed and Will met at the entrance to the Brooklyn Bridge and proceeded to the Long Island depot, where they took a train for Bellport.

They arrived at their destination about nine o'clock, and were met by one of Will's cousins with a light wagon.

They were driven to the farm, where Will received a royal welcome, in which Ed participated.

Will's cousin Nellie was an unusually pretty and vivacious young girl, and Ed was immediately attracted to her, a sentiment she herself returned.

After inspecting the barn and other outhouses, the truck patch, and the fruit orchard, and enjoying the balmy breeze on the piazza, an early dinner was served, and the three boys started for the village in the wagon.

They put up the team at the inn on their arrival, and then made for the shore, where most of the young people had gone.

Dick Haskins, the cousin, wanted to go out sailing.

He said he knew all about a boat, so Ed and Will took his word for it and agreed to go on the bay with him.

There was a stiff off-shore breeze, and they shot away from the little wharf in fine style.

They were at the upper end of the great narrow, landlocked bay, and Nick headed for a narrow strait connecting it with Moriches Bay, which was completely landlocked.

After going through they sailed to the upper end of the smaller bay and went ashore.

Close by was a little wood which they entered.

In the midst of the wood they discovered a fisherman's hut with the smoke coming out of a small stovepipe.

The door was shut and Ed ventured to look in through the window.

Lying on the floor, with his head toward the stove and his back toward the window, was a hulking boy.

On the stove a pot was boiling.

A cap filled with eggs stood on the table, and beside it were several potatoes.

A three-legged stool, an empty box and several shelves completed the furnishing of the unfinished room.

Will and Dick came up and took a look into the place.

Suddenly a good-sized stone came through the air and hit Will under the shoulder.

He uttered a cry of pain, and all three turned around to see who had thrown the missile.

There was no one in sight.

The boy inside hearing the noise jumped up and peered out of the window.

He saw only Will and Dick, for Ed was standing close to the corner of the hut.

"I'd like to know who threw that stone," said Will, rubbing his shoulder.

"It came from that direction. Whoever did it is hiding in the bushes," said Dick. "Let's rout him out?"

They made a rush for the shrubbery and disappeared into it.

Ed remained behind to see if the guilty one would make his appearance from some other spot.

Hearing a noise behind him he looked around.

The boy he had seen inside the hut was standing at the door, and he recognized him as Mike Finn.

Mike knew Ed at once and started back in consternation.

"So this is where you're hiding, is it?" said Ed. "I suppose your father, who escaped with you, is somewhere about Well, you won't run at large very long. You'll be back on the island in a day or two, and you'll both be punished for leaving the place on the sly."

"If you give us away I'll kill you!" hissed Mike, drawing a jackknife from his pocket and opening the big blade.

At that moment a big, brawny man sneaked out of the bushes with a stick in his hand, rushed upon Ed and struck him down with it.

Ed lay where he fell and never gave a kick.

"Have you killed him?" said Mike, showing no feeling over the possible tragedy.

"I dunno, and I don't care, begorra," replied the man. "He's the villain that sint us both to the Island, and I've sworn to get square wid him. He mustn't be seen here. His two frinds are huntin' for me in the bushes. I threw a stone at this chap, missed him by a mile and hit wan of the others, bad luck to me aim. Faith, I intinded to knock out his brains. Mayhap I've done it wid the stick. Here, get a holt on his fate and we'll drop him into the bushes beyant out of sight."

They lifted the unconscious boy between them, carried him

around on the other side of the house and dumped him into the bushes.

Then they entered the house.

Ten minutes later Will and Dick came back.

They looked around for Ed, but didn't see him.

They began shouting to him, thinking he was somewhere in the wood.

Patrick Finn came to the door.

"What are yez makin' all that hullabaloo about?" he asked.

The boys stared at him.

They hadn't seen him in the hut when they looked through the window.

"We're hollering to a friend of ours. He's in the wood somewhere," said Dick.

"Get along wid yez now. Ye are trespassin'. Yer room is better than yer company, so skiddoo, or I'll be after givin' yez a lift."

"Who are you, anyway?" said Dick, saucily.

"Begorra, I'll show yez in a brace of shakes," said Mr. Finn, stepping back after his stick.

The two boys saw trouble ahead and started to retire.

Finn rushed out with the stick and they took to their heels, for they saw he meant business.

He went as far as the bushes, threatened them with a licking if they came back, and then went back to the hut.

Will and Dick hunted around for Ed, and when they failed to find him they returned to the boat expecting to find him there.

They were disappointed.

"Where in thunder has he gone to?" said Will.

"That's a puzzle," said his cousin. "Maybe he's hiding on us."

"It isn't like him to do that."

"Well, let's sit down and wait for him. He'll show up presently, for it's close to sundown and time we started back."

So they waited, but the minutes passed and Ed didn't appear.

In the meanwhile Mike and his father had their supper out of the pot, which contained a chicken, stolen from the neighborhood, and several potatoes.

It was quite a feast for them, as they were not accustomed to luxurious living.

By the time they were through it was sundown.

Mr. Finn went out and took a look at Ed.

He was still dead to the world.

Looking around cautiously and seeing no one, he called his son.

"There's an ould well, or somethin' of the kind, at the edge of the wood," he said. "We'll pitch him into it. That will be the finish of him, and may bad luck foller him into the next wurruld."

"Are you sure he won't be able to get out?" said Mike, without a spark of compunction.

"Get out, is it? Sure it's tin fate deep if it's wan. Faith, he'll have to sprout wings to get out of it. We'll lay some pieces of wood across the top, tear up some of the bushes and lay him on top of that. It will make an iligant grave for him, so it will, and no wan will iver drame there's a corpse down there."

"I'm glad he'll be out of the way," said Mike, vindictively. "I hate him!"

"And good cause ye have and mesilf, too. We'll cross the island after we get rid of him, stale a boat somewhere along the shore and make our way across the Sound. Whin we get to Bostin we'll be safe enough."

"What will the old woman do now we can't go back to the city?"

"She'll have to shift for hersilf as she's been doin' since we were sint to the Island."

The sun disappeared and dusk came on.

"Now, thin, grab him by the fate and we'll get rid of him in a pig's whisper," said Mr. Finn.

They bore Ed through the wood to the hole in the earth that Finn took to be a dry well, and dumped him in, little caring whether he fetched up at the bottom with a broken neck or not.

Fortunately the office boy landed on a pile of soft debris and sustained no injury.

Then the rascally father and son covered over the top of the hole the best way they could, and left the senseless boy to his fate.

CHAPTER XII.

A CHAPTER OF TROUBLE.

"Say, I don't like the looks of this thing at all," said Will, as the sun sank below the horizon. "Ed wouldn't stay away in this fashion of his own accord. Something has happened to him."

"What could have happened to him?" asked Dick.

"Maybe the fellow who threw that stone fell in with him and knocked him out."

"I believe that was the Irishman who ordered us away from the hut. He wasn't in the place when we looked through the window, and that was the time the stone hit you."

"He's big enough to make mincemeat of Ed if he got hold of him. One blow of his fist would knock any man, even a cop, spinning. I wouldn't be surprised if he did something to Ed. Let's sneak back and see what we can find out. It's getting dark and something has got to be done. We can't go back without Ed," said Will.

They got up and walked cautiously into the wood.

It was darker there than in the open.

When they reached the bushes that surrounded the little clearing they saw Finn and his son talking at the spot where Ed then lay.

The two boys watched them.

In a few minutes they saw the scoundrelly pair stoop, pick up something from the bushes and walk off slowly with it between them.

"What are they carrying?" asked Will.

"I couldn't tell you," replied Dick. "Shall we follow them or look into the hut?"

"We'll do both. They can't get away from us with the load they have."

The boys ran over to the door of the hut as soon as the Finns disappeared into the wood, and looked in.

It was so dark in there they had to strike a match.

This showed them that there was no one in the hut.

Then they hurried after the Finns and sighted them at the edge of the hole.

There was light enough for them to make out that the object the man and boy had with them was a human being.

"They've got Ed," breathed Will. "What are they going to do with him? He's as limp as a rag. It can't be they have killed him. Good heaven, that would be terrible."

"Good gracious, they're going to drop him into that hole," cried Dick.

"Come on. We'll rush at them."

"No good. They've dropped him in. It will be safer for us to wait till they go away."

They watched the Finns cover the hole and return through the wood to the hut.

By that time it was nearly dark in the open.

They tore away the covering of the hole, and Will flashed a match down, but the light did not reach half-way to the bottom.

"I'm afraid Ed is a goner. This hole appears to be quite deep. I can't see to the bottom. What are we going to do?" said Will.

"We must get a rope somewhere. There's a light yonder. It's probably a farmhouse. You wait here and I'll go there and get a rope and help."

"All right. Hurry."

Dick was off like a shot.

Will stuck his head down the hole and called Ed by name. He received no reply.

"It will be tough if that Irishman and the boy have killed Ed," he thought. "I'll never have the nerve to carry the news to his folks."

He called down again, with the same result as before.

"It's awfully lonesome here. I hope Dick will be back soon."

At that moment he heard an ejaculation and an imprecation behind him.

He turned and saw two indistinct figures in the gloom with bundles in their hands.

Instinctively he felt they were the Irishman and the boy.

As he started to scramble up he received a violent shove.

He pitched forward into the hole and went down head-first.

Instead of alighting on Ed he hit a mass of soft brush, which yielded like a spring, and he slid into another hole and went sliding forward along a smooth hard surface as if he were on a sled.

The slide seemed an endless one, though in reality it was over in a minute when the angle was suddenly reversed and Will slid uphill and then stopped.

"Holy smoke!" he cried, "what am I up against?"

"Who's there?" asked a familiar voice out of the gloom ahead.

"Is that you, Ed?" cried Will, with a revulsion of sentiment from very joy at finding Ed was alive after all.

"Yes, it's me. Perhaps you can tell me how I got here, for you have come yourself. Blessed if I can make head or tail of the situation. I was standing at the door of the hut talking to Mike Finn——"

"Mike Finn!" cried Will. "You don't mean it. I saw a boy with the Irishman, but it was too dark in the wood to see his face very clearly."

"You must have seen Mike and his father. They both escaped from Blackwell's Island early yesterday morning."

"I know they did. I read about their escape in yesterday's paper."

"As I was saying, I was talking to Mike at the hut when something hit me and that's the last I remember till I came to my senses here in the dark. I suppose you can tell me where we are?"

"We're somewhere underground, that's all I know about it," returned Will.

"Underground!"

As he spoke Will flashed a match.

The blue flame showed that they were in a tunnel, which sloped upward where they sat, and was lined with dirt and pebbles which had helped stay their progress.

The slope down which both had come involuntarily was, on the contrary, nearly as smooth as glass.

The smooth part of the tunnel was narrow, and roundish on the sides and top, while the rough part was much wider and broken away, and shapeless.

"It must have been old Finn himself that Dick and I ran up against," said Will. "I never saw the man before, so did not know who he was. When we came back to the hut after looking in vain for the chap who threw the stone, who I'll bet was Finn himself, the Irishman ordered us away, and because we didn't go quick enough to suit him he chased us with a club. Then we went back to the boat, thinking we'd find you there, but you were not. We sat and waited for some time for you to show up, then I got uneasy, feared something had happened to you, and Dick and I went back into the wood. We got there in time to see Finn and his son pick something out of the bushes, which something proved to be yourself. They carried you to the mouth of a hole and dumped you down. That's how you happen to be here. They meant to put you out of the way for good, for they covered the hole over with branches of trees and brush."

"My gracious, is that a fact?" cried Ed.

"As sure as you're born it is. As soon as they went away Dick and I pulled the stuff away from the hole, and I flashed a match down, but the hole was too deep to make out the bottom where we suppose you were. Dick said we must have a rope to get you out, and he started for a farmhouse a short distance off to get one and fetch help, too. While he was gone I remained at the mouth of the hole. Then I heard a noise. I looked around and saw two figures behind me whom I took to be the Irishman and the boy. As I started to get up one of them, the man, I judge, gave me a push and I fell into the hole, slid down through a hole at the bottom and fetched up here. That's how I come to be with you," said Will.

"I call that an extraordinary story. Do you really think Finn intended to put me out of the way for good?"

"It looked like it when he dumped you down a deep hole that you couldn't escape from, if you had remained at the bottom of it, without a rope."

"I think I'll have a fresh case against the Finns when they're caught, with you and your cousin as witnesses," said Ed. "The important thing now is to get out of here. Strike another match. This is the first time I've been out of them. I left my matchsafe home. Forgot it when I changed my clothes."

Will lit another match and Ed jumped up, hitting the roof of the tunnel, which fortunately was only earth, and bringing down a small load of it around him and throwing him on his back.

Something heavy came with it, and he took it for a stone.

It struck him on the chest.

When he recovered from the shock and pushed the thing away he found it was a tin box.

Will lit another match to help his friend out of his predicament.

"Hold the match this way," said Ed, shaking himself free of the dirt. "See what hit me?"

"A tin box!" cried Will. "Is it heavy?"

"Not overmuch. If it had been it would have broken my breast bone."

"It came out of the roof, eh?"

"Yes, with the dirt. There's quite a hole there now."

As he spoke there came another small avalanche of earth, entirely separating the boys.

"Gosh! we'll be buried alive if we don't look out. Give me your hand and I'll pull you out."

"Hold on. I see the stars through this hole. We're not so far from the surface."

"How far do you think?" cried Will, eagerly.

"Maybe seven or eight feet."

"But the earth will cave in if we try to climb up."

"If it caves in the right way it ought to help us. Crawl over the dirt to this side."

With some difficulty Will did so.

"Get on my shoulders and see if you can crawl out," said Ed.

Taking off his shoes and handing them to Ed to hold he mounted on his friend's shoulders, steadying himself against the sides of the hole.

The earth crumbled away some, but not enough to incommode them.

Will's head and arms rose above the level of the ground into the open air.

Then, digging his toes into the earth, he got out.

"Throw up my shoes," he said.

Ed threw them up, then tossed out the tin box.

"Now it's my turn," said Ed. "Lie down and reach me your hands."

Their hands gripped firmly together, then with Will pulling Ed gradually dug his way up and finally got out.

"That was quite a squeak we had, old man," said Ed. "Now where is the hole where we got into that tunnel?"

"Up there, near the wood. There's a light there. I'll bet Dick is there with somebody from the farm. Come on."

They didn't have far to go.

The lantern stood on the ground and two men were hauling on a rope that was down a hole.

Up came Dick out of the depths.

"He's not down there," he said. "There's a hole at the bottom that goes underground somewhere. He had slipped into that. You'll have to get another rope and tie it to this one, then——"

"What's the use? I'm out," said Ed, stepping forward.

Dick nearly fell back into the hole from surprise.

"How did you get out? Was it before I got back with these men? I found my cousin gone and didn't know what to make of it. Where is he?"

"Here I am. That rascally Irishman caught me here alone and threw me down that hole."

"He did!"

"Yes. I shot through a hole in the bottom and fetched up against Ed who was at the other end of the tunnel."

"What tunnel?"

"The tunnel that hole connects with."

"I've just been down the hole and I saw another opening at the bottom; is that the tunnel you mean?"

"It is."

"How did you get out and where?"

"Come along, I'll show you."

The party walked over to the spot where the earth had caved in and saw how the two boys had made their escape.

"Well, we must get back home," said Dick. "I guess my folks think we have stopped at the village to see the show that is given there to-night. We'll have to eat at one of the restaurants. They'll all be open late to-night, I guess."

Thanking the farmer and his man for their services the boys hurried back to their boat.

"What are you carrying?" asked Dick, noticing the tin box.

"Where did you get that?"

Ed explained.

"Gee! Maybe it's full of money. Going to divide?"

"If there's money in it I'll see that you fellows get a fair share," said Ed.

They reached the boat, embarked and sailed back to the wharf under the stars and a bright sky.

Then they walked to the village, looking much the worse, that is Ed and Will, for their afternoon adventures.

They entered the first restaurant they came to, got outside a big meal, which Ed paid for, then they went to the inn, got the rig and drove to the farm.

It was then after ten and the family were up waiting for them.

They had a great story to tell.

The tin box was an object of great curiosity.

The lock was cleaned out and all the keys in the house tried on it, but without avail.

Dick proposed to knock the cover off, but Ed objected.

He said he would take it to the city and have it opened by a locksmith.

Then everybody turned in for the night.

CHAPTER XIII.

CONCLUSION.

After breakfast, which was ready at seven, the boys were driven to the station and caught the train for New York.

They reached their offices late, but nobody said anything to them about it.

The first thing he did was to telephone the police about Mike Finn and his father, telling where he had encountered them.

Montana Copper went up to \$10.75 that day, and at half-past three Ed went home carrying the tin box with him.

He got off at a station some blocks lower than his regular one to look for a locksmith.

He found one, and after considerable trouble the man opened the box.

The contents of the box consisted of a lot of ladies' jewelry, set with diamonds, rubies, and other precious stones.

He had no idea of their value, but judged that it must be considerable.

He displayed it all before his mother and sister after telling his story.

His mother said the jewelry was worth several thousand dollars.

The conclusion they reached was that some one had stolen it and buried it, and then, for some reason, never dug it up.

Will came up that evening to learn what the box contained.

He was surprised to find that it was jewelry.

"You must write to your uncle and have him make inquiries in the village and of the local police concerning this jewelry," said Ed. "As it has been underground some time it will probably be difficult to trace; but it's my duty to find the rightful owner if I can."

Will promised that he would attend to the matter, and after remaining all the evening went home.

The New York police telephoned the police of several places on Long Island about the two Finns, and a detective went to Bellport to follow up the fugitives from that point.

The pair were traced to the north shore where it was found they had made their escape in a catboat, presumably across the Sound.

The police at various points along the Connecticut shore were notified, and the Finns were finally captured walking the railroad track near New Haven.

As they refused to return to New York of their own accord they were jailed until they could be legally brought back.

When Ed learned they had been taken he and Will went to headquarters and told what they believed the Finns had been guilty of the afternoon of Decoration Day.

They were told that if they intended to bring a charge against the pair they would have to see the police of Bellport about it.

If there was evidence enough to try them on they would be turned over to the Long Island authorities on a warrant as soon as they had served out their time on the Island, which would be extended for their attempt to escape.

During the next week all copper stocks advanced more or less, Montana Copper going to \$15, which put Ed \$3,000 ahead of the game.

The Curb became the center of attraction for a large number of speculators.

Naturally there was much excitement in that quarter.

All the papers had something to say about the copper situation, and all were optimistic concerning high prices in the near future.

Another week rolled away and Montana Copper kept on to \$20.

About this time Will received a letter from his uncle telling him that he believed the identity of the owner of the tin box and its contents had been established, and he wished he would bring Ed down with the box on Saturday afternoon.

Will showed the note to Ed and they arranged to go to Bellport on the coming Saturday afternoon.

Will wrote to his uncle to that effect.

When they arrived at the village they found Dick awaiting them with the wagon.

They were taken to the farm where they received a hearty welcome.

Then the boys learned that a well-to-do old lady, who lived on her own estate a few miles out of Bellport, had been robbed of a tin box of expensive jewelry ten years since.

A maid, who left suddenly, was suspected of the theft.

The police were put on her track, and her body was found in a creek not far from where Ed discovered the box.

Finger marks on her throat indicated that she had been strangled by a man and afterward thrown into the creek.

A reward of \$2,500 was offered for the recovery of the missing jewelry.

This was afterward raised to \$5,000, but produced no result.

The jewelry was never heard of, though the pawnshops and "fences" of New York were thoroughly searched by detectives eager to get the reward.

The farmer said he had communicated with the old lady, stated the facts as he knew them, and she had expressed an eager desire to inspect the box.

He took Ed and Will to the old lady's mansion, and presented them to her.

As soon as she saw the tin box, though it was much changed from its original spick and span appearance, she knew it at once, and declared it was her property.

She described its contents with an accuracy that surprised Ed.

"It's yours, ma'am," he said, handing it over to her.

She opened it and found everything inside, not a single piece missing.

"I am overjoyed to get this back," she said, "and I will willingly pay the reward I offered ten years ago."

She said the jewelry was worth all of \$15,000, and she drew a check for \$5,000 and handed it to Ed.

When the office boy got it cashed through his boss's bank, he handed Will \$1,000, and sent a similar sum to Dick.

His adventure added \$3,000 to his own capital.

Two weeks later he sold out his copper stock at 28 and a fraction and cleaned up \$17,000 by the deal.

As he felt greatly indebted to the stenographer for putting him on to Montana, which proved the biggest winner of all, he handed her a present of \$1,000.

That wound up his speculation on the market for some time to come, for there was little doing in Wall Street that summer, and early in the fall he was promoted to desk work in the counting-room and a new office boy took his place.

As this story deals only with Ed, the office boy, we must draw the curtain over his subsequent career as a young clerk.

As the reader will perhaps wish to learn if the Silver Crescent Mining and Milling Co.'s stock ever amounted to anything we will say that some years later a couple of prospectors went over the abandoned property and found enough encouragement to induce them to revive the company and sell some more stock for development purposes.

Within a few months they found a ledge of very good ore and that put the mine on its feet again, for it was listed on the Goldfield and other exchanges at prices varying from two to ten cents.

When it reached ten Ed sold the stock out and made \$1,000 by the transaction.

Thus the professor's present turned out to be worth something after all.

As to the Finns, father and son, when they were released from the Island they were arrested on a warrant served by a Bellport officer, and taken to the village, whence, after an examination before the magistrate, at which Ed, Will and Dick testified, they were remanded to Riverhead for trial.

Eventually they were tried and convicted of an attempt to murder Ed, and Mr. Finn got six years in Sing Sing, while Mike was sent to the Elmira Reformatory to remain till he was twenty-one.

As nothing more remains to be said we will close the history of Ed, the office boy.

Next week's issue will contain "LOST IN THE BALKANS; OR, THE LUCK OF A YOUNG WAR CORRESPONDENT."

SEND POSTAL FOR OUR FREE CATALOGUE.

CURRENT NEWS

The new Cunard liner "Aquitania," which is about the same size as the "Imperator," is provided with a novel feature in her balanced rudder. This consists of a doorway leading to the interior of the rudder, which is of sufficient size to admit workmen at any time it should become necessary to remove the pin which connects the rudder to the ship. According to the Shipping World this pin is four feet in length and is larger than the heaviest projectile made for modern artillery.

Five thousand persons are reported to have been killed in the fighting that is going on in Canton and its environs between Government forces and rebels. Looting continues, and there has been wholesale destruction of property. The residents in the Shameen or foreign quarter of Canton had many narrow escapes from bursting shells. The rebels hope to embroil the foreigners in the trouble. Prisoners are being led through the streets of Canton by wires running through holes drilled in their noses.

Two million acres of land, which, according to James J. Hill, is the best wheat land on earth, will be distributed to settlers by the United States on September 23 at a public drawing at Glasgow, Montana. The land consists of a tract forty by eighty miles, and is known as the Fort Peck Reservation, in Montana. It is the last Government reservation to be divided by Uncle Sam. James J. Hill, when asked for his opinion of the land, said: "They are sun-kissed acres—the best wheat land on God's footstool."

Mrs. Mary Simms, a wealthy widow of New York, a pupil at the Hempstead Aviation field, was saved from severe injury and probable death the other day by being strapped to the seat of her monoplane. When 200 feet high the machine turned turtle and fell. She was trapped underneath, but when the airship was raised and the straps were unfastened Mrs. Simms emerged from the wreckage smiling and not much hurt. She is practicing for Suffragette Day, September 6, when she will fly out to meet the procession of hikers.

The divining rod, the efficacy of which has been certified by the Academy of Sciences, France, is now being put to a more severe test than ever. At the Straits of Antioche, off La Rochelle, a diver is scouring the ocean bed under the guidance of a man who claims to be able to locate sunken gold with his wand of hazel. They are searching for a brig which sank at this spot over ninety years ago with a cargo of gold ingots and diamonds and other precious stones to the value of several million dollars. The efforts of the expedition, which is financed by a syndicate, are followed with great interest by the public.

A Masonic apron more than 100 years old is in the possession of Frank Williams, district manager of an automobile company in New Orleans. According to Mr. Wil-

liams, the apron was originally the property of his great-great-grandfather, Jesse Kent, of Yorkshire, England, and has been handed down five generations of his family. The apron is of silk, was made in 1799 and contains all the symbols significant in Masonry. According to Mr. Williams, it is the only one of its kind in existence. At the time the apron was made there was no difference between the Royal Arch, Seventh Degree, and the Lilac Lodge, which is the Third Degree, since which the lodges have been separated. Mr. Williams has refused requests from the State Museum of Georgia for the loan of the apron.

Word reached Watertown, N. Y., recently that Frederick Brosseau, twenty-four years old, who was kidnapped by gypsies nearly seventeen years ago, has been restored to his parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Brosseau, of Sissonville, N. Y., who had long mourned him as dead. On October 14, 1896, when seven years old, young Brosseau left home to meet his father at the edge of the village. That was the last seen of the boy in Sissonville. About a week ago a young man deserted a band of gypsies in the Canadian wilds and took refuge with the monks of Oka, whose isolated monastery is forty miles from Montreal. He could remember nothing of his history previous to becoming a member of the band except that he had been called Fred and that his former home was in Northern New York. The presence of the wanderer was reported by the monks to the Montreal police, and an aunt of the young man recognized his picture in a newspaper. The parents were notified and went to Montreal, where they positively identified Brosseau by a birthmark. He is being detained by the police as a witness against some of the gypsies who are under arrest, charged with kidnapping.

Hermann's jewelry store in Thames Street, Newport, R. I., was entered the other night and jewelry valued at \$15,000 was taken. The robbery was discovered by the janitor opening the store. Going to the rear of the place he saw lying in front of the safe three extension burglar jimmies. There were also a bottle of nitro-glycerine, two large suit-cases and a dark blue quilt. For some unknown reason the safe had evidently not been touched. The show-cases had been broken open, and all their contents taken away. These consisted of pearl necklaces of small stones, and ornaments of diamonds and other precious stones. Jewelry valued at \$50,000 was in the safe. With the store lighted after it was closed, it seems impossible that burglars could work at the case in the front of the store, hardly eight feet from the door, and not be discovered. It is thought that the men were familiar with the kind of locks on the cases. The opinion prevails the robbers were frightened away before finishing their work. There is no insurance. The belief is strong that the burglars came by boat, as the store, in the heart of the business section, is less than a block from the water.

HAND IN HAND

—OR—

THE LUCKY LEGION

By GASTON GARNE

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER XIX—(Continued)

Over the fence like hurdlers came the rescue party.

Smith and Shaw heard them and grasped the situation. Without a moment's hesitation they deserted their pals and incontinently fled.

Down upon the gang of toughs came the Hand-in-Hand boys. The ruffians were dispersed like chaff. Fred and Roger were safe.

They were surrounded by their friends, and dark were the threats against Smith. It was voted then and there to expel him from the club.

So the affair ended. Roger and Fred went home, as did the others. Smith kept out of sight for some days, which was lucky for him.

The affair caused no end of talk in town. Everybody condemned Smith, as he deserved, and the young man only found his father even more frigid toward him than ever.

Roger went back to work in the office of Mr. French. A happy incident had turned to the advantage of the mill owner.

The night of the robbery of the bank, a package of the mill shares had been lost. This prevented Smith from foreclosing upon the mills, at the expiration of sixty days, as he had threatened.

The result was that owing to Mr. French's shrewd manipulation Mascuppie stock began to rise. Of course, this added to Mr. French's chances to recoup his losses, and he took advantage of it handsomely.

"We will yet turn the tide," he cried confidently. "Smith will have to sell some of his stock to meet the bank deficit, which must be paid in another month. Already friends of mine stand ready to corner it, and with their aid I will yet regain control of Mascuppie."

This would be easy, for Mr. French had the small stockholders on his side, and a small recovery of Smith's shares would give him the majority vote. And Smith was in a desperate position.

Smith knew this, and was determined to hang on to Mascuppie as long as possible. He tried to get the lost shares reissued, but the law forbade this for a certain length of time. Before that time should elapse ruin might overtake him.

Thus the hand of fate had given a reverse turn to the wheel of fortune, and the one at the top was now perilously near the bottom. So the game of life was and ever will be.

Mr. French grew to repose more confidence in Roger from day to day.

He found the young bookkeeper faithful and exact. There were traits in Roger's character which he admired.

Quite often Myrtle came into the office. If her father were out, she chatted with Roger until his return. Such moments were bright pearls in the young clerk's memory.

Meanwhile Smith was heard from in another town, Rockvale, at the further end of the lake. He was reported as leading a fast life, gambling and drinking, and seemed to have unlimited resources. This set all Fairview to talking.

It was wondered much where all this money came from. People began to look upon the elder Smith with suspicion also, as being aware of his son's vices and possibly backing him up. The result was that Egbert Smith himself began to wax suspicious of his own son.

A horrible thought crossed his mind. Could it be possible that James was implicated in the mysterious robbery of the bank? At the bare thought the old banker's heart became as adamant and positively murderous impulses seized upon him.

He determined to confront James with the charge, and if possible wring a confession from him. If he brought back the missing two hundred thousand, well and good. If not, and he admitted the robbery—the elder Smith's jaws closed with a wolf-like snap. It ill-betided young Smith. So James one day received an imperative message from his father. He read it with a grim smile.

"I wonder what the governor wants?" he mused. "Perhaps he's coming to his senses, and has made up his mind that it don't pay to buck against me after all. Well, I'll go up and see him."

So James came up on the train from Rockvale, and went to the bank to meet his father. The bank had suspended, but Egbert Smith was always at work in the private office.

As James came in the old man looked up. The son grinned and bowed in a suave manner and said:

"Well, dad, I've answered your call. I reckon you're ready to make up."

Smith jumped up and slid quick as thought behind his son and barred the door, drawing the key from the lock. James turned to receive a shock. His father, white-faced and stern, held a revolver pointed at him. For a moment James felt his blood run cold.

"Put down that shooting-iron," he cried in a shaky voice. "You can't murder me. I'll yell for help."

"Sit down in that chair," said the banker in cold, curt tones. "Don't disobey me or I'll plug a hole through you."

James obeyed and sank into the chair with a weak feeling in the knees. Then Smith sat down at the table, still holding the revolver. For a moment there was a deep silence.

"Well," finally James blurted out, "what kind of a game are you trying on me anyway?"

"Young man, I will have your life if you do not come to terms," said Smith, rigidly. "Bring back the money you stole from this bank!"

For a moment James Smith nigh lost his nerve. He feared in that instant that his father knew the truth. But he quickly recovered. He was too apt a pupil of Ike Shaw's to show the white feather now. The fleeting expression was succeeded by a cold, incredulous one.

"I thought you had some fool ideas in mind," he said contemptuously. "What do I know about the bank robbery? You know that I was at home that night and took breakfast with you that morning."

Smith did remember this and was staggered. But he continued:

"Well, you know something about it. As a son of mine, you should be loyal and tell me all."

"Well, you're a softy," said James, with a chuckling laugh. "The next man you tackle with an accusation like that be sure first that you have good evidence. I am as innocent as a babe and can prove it."

"Well," said Smith, slowly, "perhaps you can explain how you happen to have so much money to spend?"

"I haven't got much," replied James. "And what I get I make, which ought to be to my credit. To be sure, it is owing to my good luck as a gambler. But you ought to be proud to have a son who is able to care for himself."

Egbert Smith was in that moment defeated. Shrewd old rogue he was, but the son had greater nerve.

CHAPTER XX.

ON THE ICE.

Smith put the revolver in the table drawer. He looked half pleased as he said:

"Well, Jim, I think you ought to stand by your father better. I had a great career mapped out for you, but your indiscretions spoiled my plans. Only think: you might now have Myrtle French for a wife and be the leading young man of the town. As it is, with this stroke of hard luck, it looks as if both of us must come to the poorhouse or State's prison."

James winced a bit at this. He knew that part of what his father said was the truth. A faint twinge of regret for a moment entered his bosom as he reflected that it might after all have been better for him to stick by the old man. But the next moment he hardened again. He would not admit it.

"It's your own fault, dad," he said coolly. "You never would give me a chance. But, however, I'm willing to forgive you and help you out of your scrape. I suppose this bank robbery has hurt you."

"More than you can know," declared Smith, senior. "It has given my most hated enemy a chance to get the whip

hand on me and effect my ruin, whereas he was at my knee."

"You mean Hiram French?"

"Yes!"

With this Egbert Smith detailed the affair with French. He showed how the balance of power at the Mascuppie Mills had been in his hands, and how the stock had depreciated through his manipulation. Also how he was now unable to control it, and the advantage was likely to slip from him and French yet defeat him.

James listened soberly.

He saw now the inside of the affair completely. He realized too late that he had made a mistake in robbing his father. He had simply "cut away his own nose to spite his face," as the old saying goes.

In revenging himself upon his father, he had placed the means in the hands of a hated foe to defeat him in turn. Chagrin and anger filled his breast. He was half tempted to make a clean breast of it and restore the money he had taken from the bank. But he saw that this was impossible.

Had he been alone in the crime he might have succeeded. But he remembered Ike Shaw. He knew the young cracksmen would never agree to such a plan. What was to be done?

Egbert Smith watched his son's face furtively. He saw that James was interested and felt the reverse in affairs as keenly as he did. But neither could suggest a plan.

The result, however, was that before he left, James took his father's hand and said:

"Governor, we must pull together hereafter. It won't do to separate. I'll do all I can to help you beat French and set matters right. And you must stand by me."

"Now you talk like a dutiful son," declared Egbert, with warmth. "I am sure now that we shall succeed."

"You bet we will, even if we have to burn those mills to do it. Ah——"

Egbert Smith's face turned ghastly white. He seemed likely to faint, and James sprang to his side.

"Just a little faintness, that's all," he said. "Give me a glass of cordial, James. That will do. Let me see. You made some remark about the possibility of the Mascuppie Mills accidentally catching fire."

James looked at his father. The expression of fiendish resolve in his eyes even frightened the older villain.

"Mills often are burned from spontaneous combustion in the cotton bales," said James. "Of course, no other cause could be attributed to the burning of the Mascuppie. But insurance policies on mills are always very risky."

"Yes, very," replied Egbert, emphatically. "Good-by, James, my son."

"Good-by, father."

The door closed and Egbert Smith was alone. It was late before he went home that night, but he was in much better spirits, and slept better than for many nights.

As for James, he spent the evening at Shaw's saloon. There he succeeded in dropping quite an additional sum at cards, and went to bed at an early morning hour with the assurance of a big head on awakening.

At this juncture Fairview became interested in an event which was of yearly occurrence in the town.

(To be continued.)

FACTS WORTH READING

STEEL CARTRIDGE SHELLS.

The infantry soldier carries, on the average of the principal armies, about 120 rounds on his person. This number is admittedly insufficient for modern conditions, but cannot be increased without overloading the man. Many attempts have been made to reduce the weight of the ammunition, but without much success. The weight of the bullet is fixed by considerations of ballistics, and it is only the brass cartridge case which affords any scope for reduction of weight. Aluminum has proved absolutely useless, though it is possible that the new duralumin alloys may do better. However, the Germans have now produced steel cartridges of only one-third the weight of the present brass cases, and it is stated that these have been tested for efficiency and durability and found satisfactory. Since the brass case is about half the weight of the whole cartridge, a reduction of two-thirds of its weight is equal to a reduction of one-third of the weight of the cartridge, enabling thirty-three per cent more rounds to be carried without increasing the soldier's load.

A NOVEL ELECTRIC CLOCK.

Daniel Drawbaugh, a pioneer electrical inventor, whose activities especially in telephone lines are well known, in the late sixties built a clock which is now running at Carlisle, Pa., in the office of his son, Charles H. Drawbaugh. The clock has continued to operate since 1870, except when being moved from place to place, and operates without winding. The pendulum, weighing forty-five pounds, is operated by an ordinary electro-magnet and a permanent magnet armature, the current in the electro-magnet being reversed as it passes the armature. The battery consists of a plate of copper and another plate of iron, which are buried in the earth. These plates give a small electro-motive force, and enough current to keep the pendulum swinging. A peculiar feature of the clock is the compensated pendulum, which, instead of being in the conventional "gridiron" form, comprises a pair of brass rods and a pair of steel rods, which connect with each other and with the pendulum bob by means of two short levers, so that the bob of the pendulum will be lifted to just the extent the pendulum lengthens by expansion. It is expected to run 100 years before needing renewal of any parts.

SOME WONDERFUL RIVERS.

Perhaps the most remarkable river in the world is the Amazon, the great "freshwater sea" of South America. Everything about this huge artery is on a colossal scale. At a point below the town of Para it enters the ocean by a channel which is in places twelve hundred feet deep, and at more than a thousand miles from its mouth the depth is said to be 620 feet. It is fifty miles wide at its mouth, never less than four miles wide through the last four hundred and fifty miles of its course, and the fresh-

ness of its waters is perceptible at a distance of more than five hundred miles out in the ocean. The total length of navigable waters in its system is probably not less than fifty thousand miles.

The Amazon is very close in point of size to the giant Mississippi, which is navigable to nearly three thousand miles inland, whereas the main stream of the Amazon itself is navigable for only twenty-two hundred miles; but the northern river only has about thirty-five thousand miles of navigable waters, including its tributaries.

The most elevated river in the world is the Desaguadero, in Bolivia. It is of great depth and its whole length, from the south extremity of Lake Titicaca to the northern end of Lake Aullagas, is about one hundred and eighty miles. The average elevation of the valley of Desaguadero above the level of the sea is thirteen thousand feet. The river, the source of which lies highest is the Indus, which rises on the north of the Kailas Parbat mountains in Thibet, twenty-two thousand feet above sea level.

BELGIAN SAND-BOATS.

The introduction of the sand-boat has relegated to the rear all other sports at the Belgian seaside resorts. Whizzing by, at almost the speed of an aeroplane, these fragile boats, mounted on four bicycle wheels and displaying a great mainsail, bellied with the strong wind from the North Sea, present a picture of pleasing novelty.

The Belgian coast, from the bordering French town of Dunkirk to Flushing lighthouse, the first landmark in Holland, is an unbroken stretch of level sandy beach. Dotted at intervals of from two to four miles are fascinating resorts, built upon the famous sand dunes, for which Belgium is so noted. From La Panne, Coxyde, Oostenkirk, Nieuport—all the way to the important city of Ostend, and still farther on, to the favorite seaside town of Blankenberghe, these white-winged sand-boats are sent out to compete in the races, up and down the coast. As the wind seldom abates, these contests are of almost daily occurrence.

Pleasure seekers galore gather to cheer the boats from their respective resorts. On a fine day, the entire stretch of sands is an unbroken line of moving humanity. Children on donkeys, led by costumed peasant girls who patter their bare feet over the smooth, wet beach, shell gatherers and idle strollers—all of them turn to view the picturesque scene of a dozen or more phantom-like boats sweeping abreast on land—the pennants of America as well as Belgium fluttering from their masts. Sailing by on a hurricane gale or plowing their way through a sand drift, hurling the glassy particles aloft, as a cloud of spray abeam, the passing of these boats is the signal for a spontaneous cheer that ascends and floats away across the sea, only to be echoed back, as a signal of the approaching race, to those persons farther up the strand.

YOUNG TOM BROWN

OR,

THE BOY WHO KNEW HIS BUSINESS

By ED. KING

(A SERIAL STORY.)

CHAPTER II—(continued)

"And with my consent you will reject every one of them!" cried Tom. "Don't give up, father. As I said before, I know my business, and I am going to prove that fact to the world. Now I'm off to give the sufferers whatever help I can."

Tom ran out of the house, and fairly flew back to the scene of the disaster.

He was needed as every other willing worker was needed then.

Tom worked like a Trojan, pulling dozens of poor wretches out of the ruins, and helping his fellow townsmen in every way in his power.

He was thus engaged when some one caught his arm.

Tom turned to find his old schoolmate and chum, Arthur Penrose, standing beside him.

"Oh, Tom! Look up there!" he cried. "Great heavens! There is Kate Merwin! She is doomed!"

"Kate Merwin! Why, so it is!" gasped Tom. "How in the world did she ever get up there?"

It was indeed a startling sight to which Arthur had directed Tom's attention.

Right across the street from where he had been working was the handsome mansion of Dr. Merwin, one of the richest men in Dimsdale.

The cyclone had given it a bad twist, although it had not completely wrecked it.

The front wall had fallen, the stairs were down, and the interior of the house stood exposed; part of the roof also had been torn away.

Upon the roof, on a line with the break there was a large cupola, a handsome affair in which the doctor's family often sat on summer nights, and there, leaning out of one of the windows, was the doctor's pretty daughter, Kate, a young girl of Tom's own age, who had been the schoolmate of Arthur and himself.

She looked white and scared, and was gesticulating to the crowd below.

The wind was still blowing strongly, and the shattered building was seen to sway before it.

Every now and then great beams would fall, or a mass of bricks come crashing down. It was evident enough to every one that the house was doomed, and that it was only the question of a few moments when it would come down with a crash.

"She's lost!" a dozen voices cried. "Nothing can be done to save her," and many called out in wonder to know how the unfortunate girl came to be there.

Just at that moment a horse and buggy came dashing furiously through the crowd, who fell back to make way.

"It's Dr. Merwin! It's Kate's father!" was the murmur which ran through the throng.

The buggy stopped in front of the house, and the white-haired old doctor leaped out.

At one glance he took in the situation and stood with staring eyes and clenched hands.

"Where are the rest?" he gasped, addressing a neighbor, who came hurrying up.

It was explained that all had been taken out safely but Kate, and that it was supposed that she was absent from home.

Meanwhile the house was swaying, and Kate was still looking down, making signs to the crowd below. It seemed as if the power of speech had for the moment deserted her, but it suddenly returned, if such was the case, for she called out:

"Father! Father! Save me!" There were other words uttered, but the wind seemed to blow them away. Indeed, those heard came but faintly to the ears of the people below.

"Five thousand dollars to the man who saves my daughter!" shouted Dr. Merwin, looking wildly at the sea of faces turned toward him.

No one answered for a moment.

"Then a hoarse voice called out: 'It's no use, doc! It can't be done! You had better go away.'"

Friends pressed about the old man and tried to carry out the roughly spoken, but kindly meant suggestion, by drawing him away from the scene, when suddenly Young Tom Brown forced his way through the crowd to the place where the doctor stood.

"I can save Kate, Dr. Merwin," he said, with an assurance which sent a thrill of hope into the doctor's heart. "At least, I think I can. At any rate, I am willing to try."

The doctor put both hands on Tom's shoulder and looked him straight in the face.

"Can you? Can you? Will you?" he said, brokenly. "How?"

"I can. I will, or I will perish in the attempt," said Tom. "Let some one get the longest ladder from the hook and ladder house!" he shouted. "Bring ropes with it. The longest you can find. I'm going to make the try."

Those on the edge of the crowd started at full speed for the hook and ladder house, anxious to render what help they could.

The crowd made way for Tom as he moved toward the swaying building.

"Hooray for Young Tom Brown!" they shouted. "He knows his business!"

And they whispered to each other:

"He'll do it!"

"If there is a boy in Dimsdale who knows his business, it is Young Tom Brown!"

But before the helpers could reach the hook and ladder house, Tom's plan was knocked "six ways for Sunday," as the saying goes, for the wall against which he was about to put the ladder fell with a crash, and as the crowd went tumbling back to get out of the way of the falling bricks, they cried out: "Too late! Too late! The whole wall is coming down!"

CHAPTER III.

TOM MAKES FRIENDS AND ENEMIES.

Tom's task was now rendered far more dangerous and difficult than it had been before.

His plan had been to put the ladder up against the wall under the projecting roof, climb in at one of the upper windows and take his chances of getting on the roof through the opening left by the fallen stairs.

Nothing of the kind was now possible, for there was nothing left to rest the ladder against.

All that remained of the once handsome mansion of Dr. Merwin were the partitions, and one reasonably solid brick wall, which was barely able to hold the structure together and support the roof.

"You will have to give it up, Tom! It can't be done," said Arthur, and while Dr. Merwin covered his face with his hands and groaned, many others said the same thing.

"I shan't give up," said Tom. "I know my business. I can and will save that girl if the house holds together long enough; if it falls I shall go with it; and that will be the end of all."

Just then the helpers came with the ladder and ropes.

Tom seized the latter and started for the telegraph pole which stood in front of the doctor's house, where Sam Bennet, the line man, stood leaning.

Sam often boasted that he was the best climber in Dimsdale, but he had never offered to lend a hand toward saving Kate.

"Sam," said Tom, "can you put that rope over the ball of that cupola if I make a noose?"

"I can, but you can't get up by it, and if you do get up, you can't get the girl down," was the lineman's reply.

"Leave that to me. I'll do the rest," said Tom. "Got your irons, Sam?"

"Yes."

"You'll do it?"

"Of course, if you say so, but you'll kill yourself, Tom; that's as sure as fate."

"Then I'll die in a good cause," replied Tom, and he hastily twisted a strong noose at the end of the rope, while Sam adjusted the climbing irons to his legs.

The crowd watched breathlessly, while the young line-man went up the pole.

All but Tom. He was working. Seizing a bit of board which lay near, he pulled out his big jackknife, and breaking the board by jumping on it off to the length of about two feet, he cut four notches in it and fastened it to a small rope, bringing the rope around it, so that it rested securely in all four notches, uniting in the centre, where it was securely fastened to another rope several hundred feet in length, but rather smaller than the one Sam was taking up the pole.

This rope Tom rapidly coiled up and threw the coil over his head, so that the rope rested upon his shoulders, and then he tied the board against his back with a piece of ordinary twine.

People crowded about him, watching with intense interest.

Many suggested this thing and that, others tried to dissuade the bold boy altogether, but Tom paid no heed at all.

By this time Sam was at the top of the telegraph pole.

Balancing himself on the cross-tree, he flung the rope out toward the swaying cupola, in which Kate stood watching his every move.

Sam hit it, first shot. The rope fell over the big wooden ball which ornamented the top of the cupola and held firm.

"Drop it!" shouted Tom.

The rope came swinging down upon the heads of the crowd.

Meanwhile Tom had whispered a few instructions to Arthur.

"You'll do it?" he said, half aloud.

Arthur nodded. He was too frightened to say much, but he managed to blurt out:

"I'll do anything you say, Tom, but, oh, I wish you wouldn't go."

"Don't go, my boy," said Dr. Merwin, coming close to Tom at the same moment. "It's only murder to let you risk your life on that rope. My poor girl is doomed!"

"I'm going, doctor. Good-by," replied Tom, simply, and then he sprang up and clutched the dangling rope, and the crowd breathlessly watched him as he went up, hand over hand.

It was a tremendous undertaking—there was no denying that—but it was not as bad for Tom as it might have been for another, for truth told, he was a famous hand at climbing a rope.

In his younger days his father had made a specialty of rigging scaffolds and building steeples, and had taken great pains to teach his boy to become an expert climber.

Many who watched Young Tom Brown knew this, and many had seen him do the rope act before; these felt that he would surely succeed in reaching the roof if the building only held.

But would it? The wind was still blowing fiercely, and the rain seemed to sway more and more.

Tom's stout body swayed with the rope in a manner fearful to behold.

Those who did not know the boy expected nothing but to see him come tumbling down upon their heads.

But Tom himself had no such idea. Up, up he went, never wavering, and really feeling but little fear, until the critical moment had passed, and he swung himself out upon the roof and scrambled to his feet.

(To be continued)

FROM ALL POINTS

By making the circuit of the world in 35 days 21 hours and 35 minutes, J. H. Mears, representing the New York *Evening Sun*, has reduced the record by nearly four days below that made by A. Jaeger-Schmidt in 1911. This meritorious achievement was greatly assisted by the hearty co-operation of the various transportation companies, who by means of special trains endeavored to reduce delays due to unavoidable accident.

An invitation to all the navies of the world to meet at Hampton Roads in January, 1915, and pass through the Panama Canal to the Panama Exposition at San Francisco, accompanied by a fleet from the United States Navy, will shortly be issued by President Wilson. Secretary of the Navy Daniels, who has been inspecting the training station here, made this announcement recently. The invitation will be in the form of a proclamation.

That there is a steady growth in the size and the power of the destroyer is evidenced by the dimensions of the latest boats of this type which are to be built for the United States Navy. They will have a length of 310 feet, a beam of 29 feet 10 inches, a draft of 9 feet 3 inches and a displacement of 1,090 tons, with a speed of 29½ knots. Incidentally, there will be a great increase in the cost. Bids for six vessels of this type vary from \$859,000 to \$924,500 for a single vessel.

The American Consul at Gothenburg has reported that the Swedish State Railway authorities are experimenting with the use of peat powder, prepared on the Ekelund system, for use in locomotives in place of coal. The powder is delivered to the fire box through a pipe, and is consumed with the aid of special apparatus invented by an engineer named H. von Porat. It is claimed that this method enables one and a half tons of powder to give the same results as are obtained with one ton of coal, that the powder does not cause the emission of sparks or smoke, and that it lessens the labor of stoking.

The Japanese government has offered a reward of \$1,000 for the recovery of a torpedo lost from the new battleship Kongo on her trial trip recently off the Irish coast. This is five times the amount usually offered by the British government in similar circumstances, and the explanation, according to the *Pall Mall Gazette*, is that the torpedoes of the Kongo are unique and embody important secrets of construction. The torpedo is said to be propelled by engines worked by heated air generated by a spirit, the composition of which is the discovery of Japanese scientists and unknown to the outside world.

Sunbeam, the pet speckled trout in the fish hatchery at Estes Park, Col., has just recovered from an indisposition caused by stomach trouble or rheumatism, and is again able to take its place as the only pet trout in captivity. The fish, now a three-year-old, and about eleven inches

long, is as good an example of gentle and loving trout-hood as it is possible to find. Fed from the hand from the time it was hatched, it feels insulted now unless its food is given to it in that way. It is very fond of being stroked and petted, and will swim around and rub itself against a person's hand whenever a chance is given it.

It is not shade alone that makes it cooler under a tree in summer. The coolness of the tree itself is to be considered, since its temperature is about forty-five degrees, Fahrenheit, at all times, and that of the human body is a fraction more than ninety-eight degrees. So, it will be seen, a clump of trees cools the air as a piece of ice cools the water in a pitcher. It is for this reason that municipal experts contend that trees should be planted in the tenement districts of large cities. If, they reason, the air can be made cooler and purer by the trees, fewer children will die of heat ailments. As more city children die during the months of June, July, August, and September than in any other period of the year, the importance of the suggestion has received wide-spread notice.

England is troubled by the superior conditions of lower-deck life in the United States Navy as compared with the British. The Admiralty has decided to send a board consisting of Vice-Admiral Williams, Fleet Surgeon Munday and E. N. Mooney, of the Royal Corps of Naval Constructors, to spend six weeks in America, chiefly at Newport and the New York Navy Yard. They will begin with studying the system of ventilation in United States battleships. The visit ought to have practical results for British sailors. The Orion class carry a complement of 800. The Wyoming carries 1,115. If the Navy Department at Washington can get 315 more men into a ship on an increase of nine feet more length, five feet more beam and one foot more draught, and at the same time house and sleep them much better, the British constructor has certainly something to learn.

A peculiar case which is puzzling the physicians at the General Hospital, Kansas City, is that of a seven-year-old boy whose heart is located under his arm. Charley Butera and his mother, Mary Butera, twenty-three years old, wife of Joe Butera, No. 3922 Wayne Avenue, are both patients at the hospital suffering from typhoid fever. When the physicians attempted to listen to Charley's heartbeats by placing the instruments on the usual spot, they could hear nothing. Investigation showed the heart to be several inches from normal position, on the left side and directly under the arm. Charley is perfectly normal otherwise and is making a good fight against typhoid fever. His mother's condition is not so good, but both have a chance to recover. The physicians plan to make a study of the case as soon as the child is in better health. They say the new location for his heart is just about as good as normal and ought not to affect him in any way.

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BRIEF BUT POINTED ITEMS

More than three-quarters of a ton of bear meat in eleven days is the record of Thomas Smith, manager of the Casement cattle ranch in the Unaweep Canyon South of Grand Junction, Col. He first killed a 700-pound black bear at Enoch's Lake. The second bear weighed 450 pounds. His 700-pound bear was the largest ever seen in Mesa County and was shot five times.

Mountings for the first triple gun turret to be placed on the U. S. S. Oklahoma was shipped from the Washington Navy Yard recently. It is so large that it will be impossible to send it by rail through the tunnels to Philadelphia, where it is to be delivered to the New York Shipbuilding Company. From the Washington Yard to Norfolk it will be carried on a barge and from Norfolk in one of the Navy fuel ships.

Beer and whiskey bottles, carelessly thrown to the ground in timbered areas, are apt to cause forest fires, according to the opinion of E. W. Ferris, State Fire Warden, of Washington. Mr. Ferris said that fire wardens had been instructed to bury all bottles they saw in order that they may not act as a concentrating medium for the sun's rays and start fires in dry leaves and moss. "I have had many reports of fires that undoubtedly started in this manner," said Mr. Ferris, "and I do not doubt in the least the opinion that there is danger from this source. It sounds odd, but undoubtedly it is true."

Judge Tucker, of Mount Clemens, Mich., granted Mrs. Christina J. Tiebel a decree of divorce from Anthony Tiebel on the grounds of extreme cruelty. Mrs. Tiebel testified that her husband bought old horses, killed them and cooked the meat with bran and made her eat it. Tiebel testified that he ate this kind of food in Germany and believed that it was good enough for his wife. The couple lived on a farm in Warren Township, Mich., till January, 1913.

The year 1912 saw the United States take more than half of the exports shipped from Yokohama, Japan, and that was a record year for that port in both exports and imports. In even figures, the imports from the United

States in 1912 was twenty-five million dollars against seventeen millions in 1911, while the exports jumped from fifty-five millions to sixty-eight millions. The total imports at Yokohama were 107 millions as against eighty-seven millions in 1911. The total exports of this port jumped from 112 millions in 1911 to 128 millions in 1912. Thus the United States took more than fifty-three per cent of Yokohama's export, a gain of four per cent over 1911, while the percentage of imports rose from twenty to twenty-three in the year. Kobe is now the largest commercial port of Japan. Here the United States had an increase in imports that was almost double, the figures being seventeen millions in 1911 against thirty millions in 1912. The exports from this port to the United States showed only the small increase of about seven hundred thousand dollars.

JOKES AND JESTS.

Harduppe—That fellow Bjones must have money. Borrower—So must I. Introduce me to him.

"Hubby, am I as dear to you now as when we were courting?" "Not at dear, wifey, but more expensive."

"So your marriage has been unhappy. Three years ago you appeared crazy to marry." "I was, but I didn't know it."

Young Lady—Please show me some ties. Clerk—A gentleman's tie? Young Lady—Oh, no! It is for my brother!

Tody—Jennie tells me young Woody proposed to her last night. Viola—I don't think I know him. Is he well off? Tody—He certainly is. She refused him.

They were talking about trees. "My favorite," she said, "is the oak. It is so noble, so magnificent in its strength! But what is your favorite?" "Yew," he replied.

"I never could understand why people dock their horse's tails," said Dubleigh. "High cost of living," said Jorrocks. "Got to dock something, these times."

"Papa, how many men have been President of the United States?" "Twenty-six, I think, Kitty." "How many of them are alive now?" "Two." "Why, it's almost certain death, isn't it?"

Two men sat at a table in a club. The first man, frowning at the other, asked: "Why on earth do you let your wife go around saying that she made a man of you? You never hear my wife saying that." "No," the other frowned back, "but I've often heard her say she tried her hardest."

"Dr. Goodleigh, in your sermon this morning I notice you spoke of a baby as a 'new wave on the ocean of life.'" "Yes, and I considered that a neatly worded poetical figure, didn't you?" "Well, it seems to me a 'fresh squall' would have come nearer the truth."

THE MAN WITH THE HATCHET

By Horace Appleton.

The night I landed in St. Petersburg it rained. An hour later the rain had turned to snow, and such a snow storm I never saw before and never want to see again.

You see, I was almost famished, for I had not tasted a bite of anything since leaving Warsaw—that's in Poland, you know—and I made for a restaurant the moment I left the train, and spent that hour at the table; for it takes time to get anything to eat in Russia, and, as a rule, it is not good for much after you get it, in my way of thinking. I was a New York boy, and if New York boys don't know what is good to eat, I should like to know who does.

You see, I was at Columbia College, in my first year, when word suddenly reached me that my father, who had gone to Russia on business, had suddenly dropped dead of heart disease while walking along the Newsky Prospect.

He left \$75,000 on deposit with Boudelwitzky & Pokemoff, his agents, and they, owing to some complication or other, refused to give it up unless I, my father's only heir, appeared before them in person, and testified to a certain private matter into which I do not care to go.

The upshot of it all was I received a letter from Count Stewiacke, my father's friend, telling me to come to St. Petersburg at once, and I went.

As I said before, I arrived there on the night of the big snow storm. After dining at the restaurant before mentioned I took a telega for the Hotel des Italiens, to which I had been directed, and when I went to pay for the ride I discovered that I had been robbed of my last cent. I was in a bad fix. The driver of the telega made a fearful row, sputtered away in Russian, shook his fist in my face, drew a crowd, and finally wound up by seizing my valise and making off with it, leaving me in a worse fix than ever.

It was after midnight, and snowing furiously. I was only a boy of eighteen, and could not speak a word of Russian nor any other language except English. I knew no one in St. Petersburg. Even my letter of introduction to Count Stewiacke was in my valise, which I had not been able to secure as yet.

As the crowd began to press about me, I grew frightened. I had an idea that every stranger in Russia lived in momentary danger of being hustled off to Siberia. Now I did not want to go to Siberia, so I went into the hotel.

I had just made up my mind that the only thing for me to do was to put myself in the hands of the police, when two gentlemen forced their way to my side, and to my intense relief addressed me in my native tongue.

"What's the trouble, young man?" demanded one, a tall, well-dressed person, with a long black beard. I told him my situation in a few words. He spoke hastily to his companion in Russian, and then turned and addressed the crowd, which immediately dispersed.

"You have had a narrow escape," he said, speaking in English again. "It is a very dangerous thing for a young stranger like you, who can't speak our language, to find himself alone in St. Petersburg by night. Have you no friends?"

I mentioned the name of Count Stewiacke.

"Good! You shall see the count in the morning," said

my protector. "For to-night you must come with me, and I will give you a bed in my house. My name is Smith. I am an Englishman. You may thank your stars that I came upon you as I did, for I have lived in St. Petersburg for years, and know the ropes."

He led me through several streets until at last we paused before a small, gloomy-looking dwelling, into which we entered.

Once we were inside the house, a neat little supper was served, and after I had eaten all I wished, and told these strangers all my business, I retired to a small room on the ground floor, very thankful that I had found such kind friends. I undressed myself and went to bed, but somehow I could not sleep. For an hour I lay there, tossing and turning, when suddenly I heard a noise at the window shutter which sent my heart up into my throat. A cold blast struck me, and the snow came whirling into the little chamber in one great gust.

The window had been thrown open, and through it sprang a man. He would have frightened the boldest person who ever breathed. He was young, but little older than myself, and dressed in a shabby uniform. He wore no hat, and his hair was badly tousled; his eyes blazed with all the fire of madness. He carried a glittering hatchet in his hand, which he waved wildly as he leaped toward the bed, hissing out some unintelligible sentences in Russian.

I did not dare to move. I could only watch him. He took off every stitch of clothing, and then made me get up and take off the undershirt which I wore.

Of course I demurred, but there was no help for it. He shook the hatchet at me and off came the shirt.

I put on his clothes and he put on mine. I was the man with the hatchet—all but the hatchet; that he kept himself. Brandishing his hatchet at me he unlocked the door, then went out into the hall, taking the key with him and locking the door on the outside.

It took me a good five minutes to recover from my astonishment. Then I began to think, and remember that this stranger had all my private papers. That those other strangers—such obliging gentlemen—knew all my private business; that I had even been fool enough to tell them about the \$75,000.

After thinking the matter over, I came to the conclusion that the best thing I could do was to climb out of the window and put myself in charge of the first policeman I met.

I paused suddenly. My breath almost stopped. I had not heard a sound at the window, but there were two soldiers peering in.

Perceiving that they were observed, one of them raised his musket and covered me, at the same time calling out something in Russian.

The second soldier leaped in through the window and handcuffed me. The next thing I knew, I was dragged out of the window and found myself hurried through the sloppy streets.

At last we came to a large, imposing building, into which I was hurried. Here I was taken into the presence of an officer, a tall man, with a wicked face, and immensely long mustache. He spoke to me in Russian. I answered him in English.

He spoke again, more fiercely, and when I answered, he drew his sword and with the flat of the blade struck me across the face.

"For heaven's sake find someone who can speak English!" I cried. "It is all a mistake. I am not the person you take me to be. I am an American! I——"

But he struck me again, shouting angrily. Then a bell sounded, and the two soldiers appeared and dragged me to a dark, dirty cell deep down under the building, reached by so many stone steps that I thought their end would never come. They thrust me into the cell and the door slammed behind me.

It was absolutely dark; the stench was horrible. I did not dare to move. In fact, I was overcome with horror. I could hear something crawling toward me over the floor.

"Brace up, Gus," I murmured to myself. "You're in a bad fix, but you must show them that a New Yorker is no coward. A fellow can only die once!"

I did not think I spoke loud enough for anyone to hear, but I was mistaken, for instantly out of the darkness a reply came.

"Ha, ha! Since ven do you speak ze Ingles, Ivan Jouroma? Liar! You tell me you speak him not!"

"Who speaks to me?" I faltered. "I am not Ivan Jouroma. I am an American. I have been arrested by mistake."

"Ha! ha! ha! Very good shoke! You get not far ven you run away, my American! So, so! You cannot play the shoke on me. Speak Russian! Vat for you put on ze airs vit us? Ve all die ven de sun rises—so!"

I tried to make the voice answer me further, but I failed. There was talk enough in Russian, but not a word in English. All my pleadings were in vain. There were many others in the cell with me, but how many?

At last, strange as it may seem, sleep came to my relief. When I awoke it was no longer dark. A soldier stood over me with a lantern. He was shaking me by the shoulder. Outside stood two more with a man in officer's dress. With them were two poor wretches, barefooted and clothed in rags. These had been my companions in the cell.

"For heaven's sake, listen to me!" I cried. "One of you spoke English in the night. I am not the person they think me. It is a mistake! Tell them! Tell them I am an American, a stranger in St. Petersburg. Tell them——"

"You vill not move me," spoke one of the prisoners in a low voice. "Ze yarn vill not vork. Be not a coward, Ivan Jouroma. You die with us!"

They conducted us to an empty vault where three empty coffins lay. Then placing me before the middle coffin, with one of the others on either side of me, they blindfolded all three of us.

Two rifle shots sounded and two falls followed.

My time had come.

My heart beat furiously as I listened for the third report. Suddenly there was a rush and a loud shout. Then excited voices talking all about me were heard.

What had happened?

A ray of hope came to me. But it was madness to hope. I put it away even as it came.

The suspense was terrible—worse even than death itself, I thought, when suddenly the bandage was torn from my eyes.

Before me stood a gentleman in citizen's clothes. "Are you Augustus Merrivale?" he demanded.

"Yes! yes! Save me! Save——"

"Stop!" he cried, seizing my hand. "I am here to save you. I am Count Stewiacke, your father's friend."

One minute later and it would have been too late. Count Stewiacke, whose power was second only to that of the Czar, arrived just in time.

It was curious, too, how it all came about.

I had started it myself, but I did not know that until the count told me when, later, we found ourselves seated comfortably at breakfast in his princely mansion, to which I was taken at once.

You see, I told my story at the hotel, and mentioned the count's name.

Although I was rejected, it occurred to the hotel clerk after I had left that I might have told the truth, and to offend Count Stewiacke would have been a very dangerous thing.

He therefore sent a messenger to the count to inquire if he knew any such person as Augustus Merrivale.

This brought the count to the hotel, and learning the circumstances, a detective was put upon my track, who succeeded in tracing me to that dreadful house.

Here the police were found in the act of arresting the inmates, and a young man was pushed forward as me.

Of course it was the man with the hatchet, and it might have worked if the count had not accompanied the detective.

Augustus Merrivale, able to speak no English, but only Russian, would not "go down" with Count Stewiacke at all.

Well, he was not all bad.

His name was Ivan Jouroma. He was a condemned Nihilist, who had in some way managed his escape.

When he found the game was up, he confessed and told the truth.

That is the way Count Stewiacke came to learn of my danger and how I happened to be saved.

All the rest remained a mystery. Who the two men were I never knew.

"You have had quite enough of Russian politics, my boy," was all the count would say, in answer to my questions. "Those fellows were expecting this Nihilist. They saw you in the street, and were struck with your resemblance to him. Therefore they took you up and—— But that is enough for you to know. Make my house your home. All that I can do to aid you shall be done."

Count Stewiacke was as good as his word.

Inside of two weeks I started on my return, with the \$75,000 safely deposited with a reliable banking house, which engaged to forward it to New York, and did so.

"I hope you don't leave us with a disagreeable impression of St. Petersburg, Mr. Merrivale," said Count Stewiacke, as he bade me good-by at the railway station.

I was polite in my reply. I thanked him for all his kindness, but I want you to understand I have no desire to see St. Petersburg again.

Every time I think of Russia I hear the crack of that fatal rifle, the thud of those poor wretches against their coffins; I see a figure rise up before me, and my heart seems to stand still—it is The Man with the Hatchet.

GOOD READING

Miss Ellen Pierce, of Washington, D. C., has fixed a valuation of \$40,000 an hour on her time, and accordingly has brought suit in the District Supreme Court against a railroad company for half that sum for keeping her locked up a half hour in the dressing room of a railroad coach. A defective lock made her a prisoner for thirty minutes while she was on her way last fall to a seashore resort.

A Russian steamship service between Vladivostok, Vancouver, Tacoma and Seattle is to be established, the outward shipments consisting mainly of soya beans, while agricultural implements and general manufactures will be carried back. It is also intended to provide special facilities for emigration from Russia, and with that object there are to be low rates, including specially reduced fares over the Trans-Siberian Railway. It is hoped to induce a large number of farmers from Canada and the United States to settle in Siberia.

Mrs. Adelaide Sherwood Soule, widow of Prof. Frank Soule, of the University of California, who died in Berkeley, Cal., took measures to insure past all doubt that neither she nor her family of pets should ever be buried alive. Her will, made recently, provides that her heart shall be cut out twenty-four hours after she is declared dead and her body held seven days. The will also provided that all her animal pets should be chloroformed within twenty-four hours of her death and their bodies held under water twenty-four hours. The provisions of the will have been complied with.

A 266-foot well on the Demoret farm, north of Atchison, Kan., sunk to that depth only recently, is flowing salt water. Where the stream runs from the well there is a coating of salt an eighth of an inch thick, and a half gallon of the water allowed to settle produced a two-ounce bottle of salt. In addition to the salt gas bubbles from the well continually. In sinking the well, workmen went through 115 feet of soapstone. There is another salt well southwest of the town, and an effort may be made to put salt production on a commercial basis.

Fred Savage, of Dodge City, Kan., had a rat killing at his farm, and when he says he had a rat killing he doesn't mean two or three dozen of the varmints. Rats are numerous in the county this year because the crops were good last year and the winter mild, so they lived in the fields. Mr. Savage decided too heavy a toll was being taken on his corncrib and young chickens, so the whole family and the hounds were called out. Runs were dug under the barn, the sheds and along the fences. Seventy-four were dug from one hole and they kept digging until the score showed 485 of the big, little, old and young.

In Jerusalem a shave and hair cut in the best shops cost 10 to 15 cents. This information can be depended on because it is made public officially by the United States De-

partment of Commerce. In Aleppo, which is not quite as far from Jerusalem as Buffalo is from New York, the barbers are much more reasonable, a shave costing from two to eight cents, a hair cut from four to ten cents, and a shampoo from five to ten cents. Jerusalem has a mayor who receives \$64 a month, and a Board of Aldermen of nine members, which serves four years without pay. The Mayor is chosen by the Governor of the Province of Jerusalem, the Aldermen are elected by such of the citizens as are Turkish property owners.

While Miss Stella Koch was busy tending a stand on the city market in Indianapolis at night a well-dressed negro went up to her and asked if she could give him some paper money for gold. "I have four \$5 gold pieces," explained the negro, "and I would like to get some paper money in exchange for them as I do not like to carry gold in my pocket." The girl said she could accommodate him and, going to the cash drawer, produced four \$5 bills. She handed the bills to the negro, and he dropped four bright, shining pennies into her outstretched hands. The negro quickly disappeared and was lost to sight before the girl recovered from her astonishment at the daring fraud.

To "Laughing Water," the newly adopted daughter of the Cree tribe of Indians in the Peace River country, Alberta, has been assigned 320 acres of the reservation on the Assinaboine River. This allotment is worth fully \$10,000. "Laughing Water" is known as the wife of Charles E. George, editor and lawyer, of San Francisco. She was formerly a Miss Selina Klein, of Milwaukee, Wis., and for years was the public stenographer at the Plankinton House in that city. Her adoption into the Cree tribe is the first recorded in the Northwest. It is a reward for nursing the chief's papooses while she was visiting with her husband at Athabasco Landing, Alberta. In addition to the land allotment a full Indian costume befitting her station of a full-fledged daughter of the chieftain was presented to Mrs. George.

P. J. Barry, of Chicago, who pitched for the Spencer, Minn., baseball team recently, journeyed with a friend to the Lake of the Woods. They were fishing and became separated. Barry hooked a 15-pound pike and while walking along, endeavoring to land it in the rocks, he came face to face with a bear, accompanied by a cub. Mrs. Bear immediately rushed the ball player. They roughed it and Barry was getting the best of the argument when, in a clinch, he stepped on the fish and fell with the bear on top. Barry's friend heard the commotion and, cutting a sapling, came to the rescue. Barry was unconscious from loss of blood, his right arm being torn from elbow to shoulder. He was taken to Kenora, and it is not believed his wounds are dangerous. The man captured the cub and took it with them. Barry will take the animal to Chicago when he recovers.

ARTICLES OF ALL KINDS

DOG BURIED IN A CASKET.

Enclosed in a satin casket sealed in a metal case the body of Pauline, a thirteen-year-old pug dog, awaits transportation next month to Los Angeles, Cal., for burial. The dog was the property of Mrs. N. B. Wilson, of Los Angeles, who has been spending the summer at Winnetka, Ill. The dog caught cold and pneumonia followed and was the cause of death, according to the attending physician.

THE BRITISH NAVAL MANEUVERS.

The thoroughness with which the British give all branches of the navy a thorough training in practical sea service, is shown by the fact that 346 ships of all classes were engaged in the summer maneuvers of the present year. The fleet included sixteen dreadnoughts, five dreadnought cruisers, twenty-five other battleships, twenty-seven other armored cruisers, thirty-five small cruisers, one hundred and sixty destroyers, forty-two submarines, eleven destroyer depot ships, eight submarine depot ships, seven mine layers, six mine sweepers, two repair ships, one hospital ship and one aerial depot ship. The last-named vessel, the cruiser "Hermes," was fitted to carry three hydro-aeroplanes. The total tonnage of the fleet was 1,604,889 tons.

NINE BATTLESHIPS TO CRUISE.

Only nine battleships of the Atlantic fleet will make the Mediterranean cruise planned for this fall, and they will not be accompanied by the torpedo flotilla, as the original programme proposed.

Secretary Daniels announced it had been determined that it would be incurring an unnecessary risk to have the destroyers make the return trip across the Atlantic in midwinter, and that they would be sent to the Mediterranean at a more favorable season.

It had been intended to send a larger number of battleships on the cruise, but four of the big vessels are being kept in Mexican waters and four others are held in readiness to relieve them at stated intervals. The ships will leave Hampton Roads October 25.

The destination of the nine battleships will be as follows: The Wyoming (flagship), Rear Admiral Badger, commander-in-chief, Malta; the Vermont and the Ohio, Marseilles; the Arkansas and the Florida, Naples; the Utah and the Delaware, Villefranche, France.

EXPLORERS ATE THEIR PET DOG.

The story told by Captain Koch, the Danish explorer, of the crossing of Greenland in company with three hardy companions, shows that the dangers and hardships to be encountered on the great inland icefield have not decreased since Rear Admiral Robert E. Peary and Dr. Fridtjof Nansen made their journeys over a portion of the same deserted wastes.

The Danish leader and his three companions, Dr. Wagner, a German, Larsen, a sailor, and Sigurdson, a native of Iceland, were reduced during their journey to eating a

pet dog, the only animal left. After landing from their ship on July 24, 1912, the first mishap encountered by the expedition was the loss of a number of ponies. Shortly afterward their motorboat disappeared through the thin ice and the explorers were obliged to wait until nearly the end of September before the ice was sufficiently thick to carry their sledges and horses. When they were ready to start Dr. Wagner fell and broke a rib.

The expedition arrived at about ten miles to the east of Queen Louise Land on October 13 and went into winter quarters there. The shortness of fodder made it necessary to slaughter all the ponies with the exception of five, which were gradually trained to cannibalism by being fed on the flesh of their brothers.

During a sledging trip Captain Koch fell forty feet into a crevasse, breaking his right leg, which accident kept him helpless in the hut throughout the winter in an outside temperature of fifty degrees below zero.

On April 20, this year, the four men broke camp and, with five sleighs, each drawn by a pony, started on their 750 mile march to the west coast.

During the first forty days violent blizzards raged practically without cessation. The ponies became snowblind and so exhausted that the men were obliged to kill three of them. Later the sun's rays tormented the travellers and burned the skin from their faces, which soon had the appearance of raw beef, while the temperature at night was 30 below zero.

Snowshoes were fitted to the feet of the two remaining ponies, and proved of wonderful assistance to them in the loose snow. But for the ponies the expedition would have been in a worse plight.

It was found necessary to kill another pony on July 11, this year, because the fodder had given out. Next day the last pony was killed, much to the distress of the members of the expedition, as a few miles further on splendid pasturage was found.

The rations of Captain Koch and his companions had been meanwhile gradually reduced, and on July 13 their provisions were finished.

A howling blizzard came on top of this misfortune, and for thirty-five hours the four men were compelled to take shelter under a projecting rock, where they remained without a morsel of food. On July 15 they tried to push on to the coast, which was now visible, but they were so exhausted with hunger, cold and wet that they were scarcely able to move. Their only chance for life was to kill the pet dog which had tramped with them for about eight hundred miles. This was done, and its flesh was cooked and eaten. The meal was hardly finished when the explorers sighted a sailing boat in a fiord to the east of Proeven, on the west coast of Greenland.

By means of shots and signals the explorers succeeded in attracting the attention of those on board the vessel, and Pastor Chemnitz, who was on the ship, soon, with the assistance of the crew, had the famished and wornout explorers in safety.

THE SURPRISE FOUNTAIN PEN

A novelty of the greatest merit! It looks just like a genuine fountain pen. But it isn't. That's where the joke comes in. If

you take off the cover, a nice, ripe, juicy lemon appears. Then you give the friend you lend it to the merry "ha-ha." You might call it an everlasting joke because you can use it over and over again. Price, by mail, postpaid, 10c.

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A cardboard finger, carefully bandaged with linen, and the side and end are blood-stained. When you slip it on your finger and show it to your friends, just give a groan or two, nurse it up, and pull

a look of pain. You will get nothing but sympathy until you give them the laugh. Then duck! Price, 10c., postpaid.

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Price, 10c. each, delivered free.

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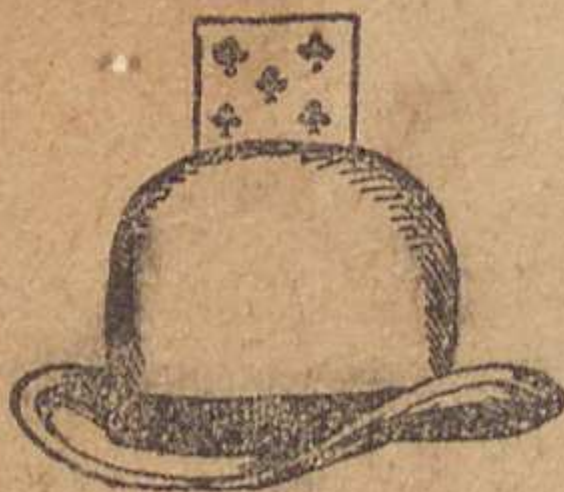
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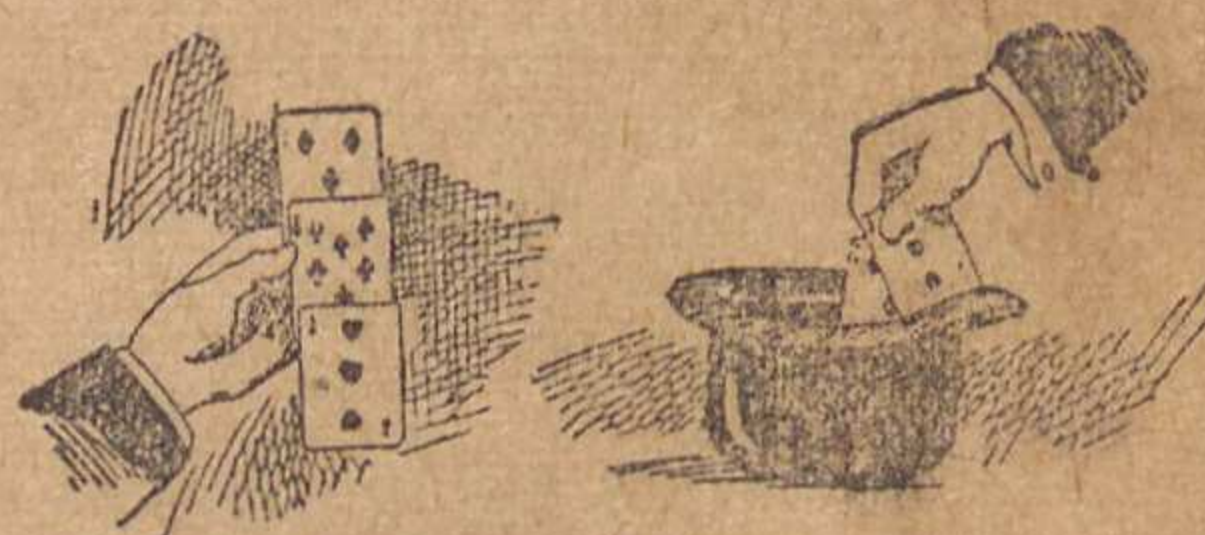
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